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Youth Leadership *

(With special references to colleges and universities)

Difficulties of Middle and Late Adolescence

To offer a satisfactory summary of the problems which confront young people, particularly those of the late high school and college age, would require at least a semester's work, and therefore we can at best point out only those features of guidance which seem to require the most attention on our part. Let it be stated at once that the most difficult phases of work in the early stages of adolescence cannot be discussed at this time, partly because the amount of time at our disposal will not permit a satisfactory rehearsal of the most significant points, partly because most of the embarrassments of this period have been left behind by college students, particularly the girls. That is, the awkwardness and lack of co-ordination of bones and muscles, which are so marked in the immediate postpubertal age, have disappeared, and at least a certain amount of nerve control and poise have replaced them in both sexes. There is apt to be another source of mortification remaining, namely, that of an inadequate elimination of the sebaceous glands of the skin, so that young people, especially young men, will suffer with acne, a condition which may make them keenly self-conscious. It is self-evident that the leader of youth, understanding the temporary character of the affliction, will meet the difficulties associated with the situation with kindness and tact.

But the first great group of difficulties confronting the leader in a college situation is found in the intellectual development of the young people, chiefly the middle adolescence, but also after the

* Abstract of an informal lecture presented to the Conference of University Pastors. The members of the Conference will readily understand that more formal presentation is required in the written summary than in the informal discussion before the group.

teen age. Middle adolescence is essentially the second romantic age, with the imagination of the young people being developed in a most amazing degree. The amount of factual information stored up during the years of elementary and high school training is far beyond that of the previous generation, but life experiences have not measured up to the needs of the individual. Besides, proper maturation is apt to be delayed by the paternalism of a large part of modern high school training, without a corresponding regard for life situations. This combination of circumstances may cause the imagination of adolescents to run riot. If we add to this the emotional instability of the teen age and the caprice of many young people in attacking problems, we have a condition which may give leaders grave concern. Then there is the factor of the abnormal form of living indulged in by many young people, late hours with the attendant evil of inadequate sleep, improper food at irregular intervals, and the final surge of physical adjustment. Small wonder that this combination of circumstances leads to a nervous tension which is the sworn enemy of calm judgment and poise. Out of all these factors develops the adolescent opposition to dogmatism. Older folks frequently make the mistake of parading their superior learning and experience instead of cleverly using it as an incentive to stimulate the energy of youth and thereby guiding the young people into the realm of steady mental growth.

Many of these factors are influential also in another field of adolescent difficulties, namely, in the field of religion and morals. The mental and intellectual difficulties are transferred to the field of the young Christian's religion, to his God and his Church. Middle and late adolescence is apt to be the period of religious storm and stress, when the faith of childhood may be undermined by the alleged superiority of human wisdom. One can hardly expect a young person in the average college to appreciate the warning offered by the apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 1:18-25. The impression of great erudition received by young people as they come in contact with men and women teachers and other leaders of society causes them to entertain doubts concerning the simple truths which they learned during their elementary school years and especially in the catechumen class, and many leaders of the young find it extremely difficult to exercise patience in dealing with young people whose false sophistication may go so far as to have them advocate extreme forms of Liberalism in doctrine and life, like the young student who declared that free love would solve the question of the relation between the sexes. If the practical impossibility of maintaining such extreme views is brought home to the young person, or if a life situation presents an in-

surmountable obstacle to the fruition of such adolescent dreams, there is danger that at least some young people may give way to morbidity which may lead to introversion and thus to frustration. This attitude may easily lead to agnosticism and atheism, to a denial of the faith of childhood. (See *Problems of Adolescence and Youth*, 99.) On the other hand, young persons with extravert tendencies may permit their opposition to dogmatism to become a hypercritical attitude which may deny, in order, the miracles of Scriptures, including the Virgin Birth, the goodness of God in permitting suffering, the efficacy of prayer, and finally even the resurrection and immortality.

Then there is the ethical side of the situation. The intuition, the instinctive tendency of adolescence, is that of breaking away from the restrictions of childhood. The idea of an independent existence looms ahead, the necessity of standing on one's own feet, of earning one's own living, of forging ahead in life. For that reason the natural selfishness of the postpubertal period tends to discard the idea of consideration for others, and arrogance and snobbery are substituted for the spirit of humble consecration and unselfish service. To many a young person the challenge of life is that of the cynical attitude: Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost. And as for interferences with what they consider their liberty? Breaking away from the restraints of conventional behavior is regarded by many young persons as their inalienable privilege. Hence we almost invariably have the dine-drink-dance-gamble group, of whose membership some one has rightly remarked that the individual may consider it his privilege to plunge into perdition, but he (or she) has no right to take anyone else along with him into that destruction of body and soul. And all too often we find men and women in administrative positions who condone such loose behavior with the plea that universal social usage has sanctioned such conduct, in spite of the fact that their attitude directly contradicts clear statements of Scripture. Cf. Rom. 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17; 1 Cor. 6:19 f.; Eph. 5:7-12.

Problems of University Adjustment

Let us briefly summarize the thoughts presented above with reference to specific problems of university adjustments, although the same difficulties are present also in the commercial and industrial fields. It is evidently not an easy matter for the average young person in middle and late adolescence to make proper life adjustments, first of all, because of the impression made by the erudition of highly trained specialists occupying important chairs at colleges and universities or holding correspondingly influential positions in civic affairs. The young person is overawed by the

learning of the specialist, of the research worker; it seems to him much more profound than that of the pastor who taught him the simple words of the Catechism. So the adolescent loses his sense of values and begins to prate about the "assured results of science" and similar shallow deductions. And there can be no doubt that the cocksureness of evolutionism and atheism in many of our universities and in quite as many editorial sanctums have led many young persons away from the faith of their childhood. Even if they continue to hold membership in a Lutheran congregation, they may lose the inner conviction which is so essential for functional Christianity. They fear to expose themselves to the ridicule of their acquaintances in the circles in which these views are generally held, and so the lack of confessional fortitude gradually leads them to a virtual denial of the truth. (See Fairhurst, *Atheism in Our Universities*, and Gilbert, *The Fifth Column in Our Schools*.)

There are other dangers which confront our youth in institutions of higher learning as well as in the commercial and industrial world. New ideologies and isms have been introduced by fifth columnists, not only in the political, but also in the moral field. The tenets of state socialism, of totalitarianism, of fascism, of rank materialism have been spread far and wide in our country. We are fully aware of the fact that the Christian religion has in the past flourished and may still exist and grow under an absolute monarchy. But Christianity stresses the value of the individual soul and of the participation of the individual Christian in the building of the Church. History has shown and is even now giving a practical demonstration of the fact that totalitarianism and communism are opposed to the principles of the Christian religion and will hesitate at nothing in subverting its truths.

Nor may we underestimate the influence of syncretism and unionism as fostered by the institutions for higher education in our country. Most of the universities and colleges which were established under strict denominational supervision and operated under the restrictions imposed upon them by the doctrinal and ethical tenets of their founders have long ago discarded these inhibitions or permit them to maintain only a very tenuous hold on the institutions concerned. The distinctions between the various denominations have long lost their significance in this respect, and the shadings of doctrinal certainty, together with the levels of doctrinal and Scriptural loyalty, are practically nonexistent. The sacredness and the inviolability of Holy Writ are constantly being ignored in the interest of expediency. The condemnation of Luther's attitude at Marburg in hindering, as the critics declare, the union of all Protestant bodies, is not only being accepted in wider

circles, but is even being extended to apply to those who staunchly uphold every part of the Scriptures and of the Lutheran Confessions.

And not the least of the problems confronting the leaders of the Church at the present time is that brought on by the impact of the present war. It is stated that youth is bewildered, confused by the situation, that our young people find an insurmountable contradiction between the principles of the Prince of Peace and the arguments for an "all-out" war of aggression. If this is true, it is certainly not the fault of the Bible or of the Lutheran Confessions, for these speak very clearly on the duty of the Church in the spiritual field, with the implications in the social field, while they teach just as clearly concerning the Christian's relation to the State, also in times of war. If there is confusion, it is in the minds of those whose duty it is to study and to teach the whole truth of the Bible. If the proper teaching has not been done heretofore, it is high time that the leaders of the Church everywhere, and in particular those who are concerned about the spiritual welfare of our Lutheran college youth, make good this defect and not make confusion worse confounded. But this leads us to the next step in our discussion.

The Leader in the University Group

There surely is not much need to emphasize the factor of personality and the attributes connected therewith, as they are listed in most books on the psychology of leadership (Kleiser, Bogardus, Tralle, and others). For example, we have the attributes which make for general ability, such as observation, concentration, memory, imagination, judgment, reason; those that are important for reliability, such as honesty, loyalty, sincerity, ambition, enthusiasm, optimism; we have those required for specific situations, such as decisions, punctuality, orderliness, courage, initiative (with originality and individuality), and tact. While not all leaders of the young possess all these attributes in the same measure, they should discover the ones in which they are most proficient and then make every effort to cultivate them by assiduous application, for, as Link has pointed out, personality can be developed, if one applies himself to the task with wholehearted endeavor.

But by far the biggest factor in the leadership of a Christian pastor is that of an adequate equipment of Scripture knowledge. Many men are apt to be just a little careless about this requirement. They rely upon the memory work of their elementary school life, of the catechumen class which they attended, upon their regular teaching in Bible classes and similar meetings, and especially upon their regular sermon preparation. But, as Amos Wells has pointed out, in one of his challenging books, most leaders, even

in high positions in the Church, possess a mere Bible dampness, which requires the pressure of an unusual affliction before it will yield so much as one drop of necessary comfort, whereas the true leader in church work will be truly Bible-saturated, so that he will know his Bible for every occasion, with dozens and scores of texts to be used for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and for Christian consolation. Truly, such a leader begets conviction and confidence, as he reaches into the treasure of the Word and brings forth what is required in every situation of life. And how readily our young people respond to such instruction, since it bears within itself the power of the Holy Spirit. Three hours a day spent on preparations for sermons and for intensive delving in the Book is by no means too much for one who would truly be a guide to the young.

However, the leader of youth must also have a knowledge, an adequate acquaintance with the normal development of adolescence. He will do well to have at least some of the most important books on the psychology of adolescence in his library, and he should, if at all possible, study at least one new monograph a year on the subject intensively. There are always new viewpoints to be considered, new phases to be studied, new settings to be emphasized. The problems and difficulties of physical, mental, emotional, moral, and religious development deserve the most careful attention, for the true leader of the young is not satisfied with a mere academic understanding of the problems involved, but strives for ever greater sympathy and — to use a word which has recently been added to the vocabulary of psychology — empathy, that is, the ability to put oneself into the place of the person with whom one deals.

Naturally this includes also the approach in dealing with young people in the middle and late adolescent stage, as well as the methods which should be employed in guiding them. We certainly have left behind us the former authoritarian approach, which insisted on unquestioning obedience on the part of the young people. Co-operation under guidance is the great objective in democratic youth work, and therefore functional and co-operative methods are in order. The leader of youth should be familiar with at least eight to ten methods of this type, not only for work in Bible hours, but also in topic meetings and open forums. One noted professor of psychology stated a few years ago that he tries to use a new method of teaching during every new semester of his teaching so that his own alertness should not suffer. (See Brewer, *Education as Guidance*.) A successful leader of the young must be like a good craftsman, who is so thoroughly acquainted with his tools that he automatically selects the one which is best suited for the particular job which he has before him.

Looking Forward to Reintegrating the Graduate

This is a problem which should concern in particular the pastor who is dealing largely, or exclusively, with college or university students. Many of these students, under the modern system of research work, will be found to be working in the field of highly specialized studies, thereby confining themselves to a very narrow and circumscribed area of the field of learning in which they hope to make their living. Their work, of course, is under the guidance of the school, which may take the necessary precautions to prevent the graduates from becoming social misfits. But the university pastor's concern will lie in his attempting to keep his charges from becoming misfits in the church. College and university work should not wean the privileged few away from those in other walks of life, and hence the wise leader will provide for opportunities to have his charges remain in contact with fellow Christians engaged in other pursuits in life. Very much can be done even during the years of college life by arranging at least occasional meetings with other young people's groups, so that the consciousness of our common heritage and objective is not lost sight of.

For all this leads to a very natural conclusion, namely, that of keeping college students and university graduates in touch with the realities of church work. Just how much can be done during their stay at college is, of course, difficult to say. In some instances a certain amount of integration with a regular congregation is possible, even though college life tends toward professional segregation on account of the special interests which engage the attention of the college youth at this time. Through all the associations of the college pastor with his charges one thought should run and one consciousness be kept alive, namely, that these young people, usually with special talents, abilities, and capacities, together with special opportunities, really owe their God and their Church a special measure of loyalty and gratitude. As they settle in their home community, or in some other city to which their professional training calls them, they should make it a point to become active members of the congregation which they will, as a matter of fact, join. Even if their profession requires a good deal of time and energy, they must realize that their highest loyalty belongs to their Lord and Master. A college pastor has wonderful possibilities to fashion his career in such a way as to be of greater service to the college youth of our country, not only in keeping them with the Church, but in making them functional members of the Church.

P. E. KRETZMANN

Verbal Inspiration — a Stumbling-Block to the Jews and Foolishness to the Greeks

(Concluded)

This is, and must be, the burden of our concluding remarks: Let us "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3); let us faithfully guard the precious doctrine of Verbal Inspiration.

We shall earnestly contend for it if we realize, in the first place, how much is at stake. We must realize what the Church would lose if she surrendered Verbal Inspiration. We would *lose our Bible*. The battle for Verbal Inspiration is not a mock battle played by children. It is not some unseemly brawl among squabbling theologians — *Theologengezaenk*. No; the Church is engaged in a life-or-death struggle. It is a battle for her most precious possession. The battle for Verbal Inspiration is a battle for the Bible.

Inspiration makes the Bible what it is — God's Word. If what the moderns have been telling us is true, namely, that half of the Bible contains human errors and that the other half, the good half, is brought to us in words of men's own choosing, then the Bible is nothing but a human book — the word of man, unreliable, at bottom useless. "As Walther pointed out in his first pronouncement in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1855, p. 248, the denial of the inspiration of Scripture is destructive of the very *ratio formalis Scripturae*; it takes away that which makes Scripture what it is; for Scripture is the Word of God because of its being inspired of God." (*Walther and the Church*, p. 12.) If we would retain our Bible, we cannot surrender Verbal Inspiration. "With the Biblical doctrine of the inspiration of Holy Scripture stand or fall the certainty, truth, and divine character of Scripture itself and of the entire Christian religion." (*Walther, Lutherstunde*.)

In very truth, the moderns are asking us to scrap our old Bible and let them give us a new Bible, one of their own making. The new Bible of the liberals is written in Fosdick's modern thought forms; the Jefferson Bible is already on the market. The new Bible of the "positive" group would eliminate the erroneous, unethical, and trivial sections which their first three objections specify. And their last three objections make short work of the rest of the Bible. The words in which the saving truth is revealed are not inspired; for that would imply a mechanical inspiration. And you must not bind men to the words; for that would be atomistic and legalistic.

They have taken away the old Bible, and their new Bible contains nothing sure and definite. They tell us that only the

concepts, not the words, of the old Bible are inspired. Who will be able to read their new Bible, which will contain not words, but concepts? — Their theologians have not yet been able to tell us exactly what the *Schriftganze* is. — They have not set down, in exact terms, what the "Word of God" says and in how far it agrees with the "Christian consciousness."

The moderns have scrapped the old Bible. It was not enough that they presented the Bible to the people as a tissue of truth and error, so that poor souls were filled with suspicion of the entire Bible and cried out: "We can no longer read it!" They had to go on and directly emasculate the true portions, causing the poor Christian to read the Gospel truths with doubt and lament: If John 3:16 is not in itself the Word of God, of what use is it to me?

The old Christian Bible, as the moderns offer it to the Church, presents a sorry appearance — mangled, mutilated, invalidated. Not a single passage and line is permitted to stand exactly as God wrote it. "Behold your Bible!" says the old evil Foe.

R. H. Malden, Dean of Wells, calls attention, in the opening paragraph of his book *The Inspiration of the Bible*, to William Chillingworth's statement "The Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants" and declares: "Any form of religion which cuts itself loose from the Bible will very soon cease to be Christian, even if it should masquerade in Christian costume." Malden does not believe in Verbal Inspiration. He does not hesitate to cut out of the Bible the Imprecatory Psalms. He characterizes the story of Creation and of the Fall as fairy tales, etc. And this is his definition of Inspiration: "When we call the Bible inspired, we mean (or at least I mean) that it is of unique and permanent religious value." (P. 4.) Question: Does not a religious body which refuses to accept the Bible as the very Word of God, accepting it only as a valuable religious treatise, cut itself loose from the Bible, with all that this, according to Malden's own statement, involves?

Dr. H. C. Alleman wrote an article for *The Lutheran*, Dec. 4, 1940, on "Let There Be No Bible Blackout" and declared: "There is one subject on which Lutherans of all shades of confessional interpretation agree." But when Dr. Alleman insists that the Bible contains errors and contradictions (*Luth. Church Quart.*, 1940, p. 356), ridicules after the manner of D. F. Strauss the account of Jesus' riding on the ass, declares that "the pure Scriptures must be separated from their dregs and filth" (see *The Lutheran*, Jan. 14, 1937), and warns against making the Bible "a legal code," he is inducing a Bible blackout. He is creating distrust of the Bible.

John W. Haley's book *An Examination of the Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible* makes fine reading. It examines 571 doc-

trinal, ethical, and historical discrepancies, and disposes of them, generally in a very acceptable manner. It shows, for instance, that Strauss's ridicule about "Christ riding upon both animals, the ass and the colt," is not justified by the text.³²³⁾ And now mark the tragedy of this: Haley makes the fatal concession that the sacred writers were "not infallible in all respects," "were not supernaturally guarded against trifling inaccuracies in the detail of unimportant circumstances (Whately)," were not "supernaturally informed on matters of natural history, history, etc., but were left to the guidance of their natural faculties (Alford)." Worse than this, he distinctly disclaims *verbal* inspiration, even in the *religious* teaching of the Bible. "Inspiration deals primarily with *ideas* rather than with *words*. It suggests ideas to the mind of the writer, allowing him, generally, to clothe them in his own language." (Pp. 6, 157.) Here he takes common ground with Dr. Alleman and the rest of the concept-theory men. Recall statements like these: "Inspiration does not apply to the words, but only to the substance." (G. L. Raymond.) "We are thrown back on the inner content of the revelation instead of its literary expression." (H. W. Robinson.) "For every essential issue there is divine truth at hand; that its *verbal expression is of human origin* can be frankly recognized" (*The Lutheran*, June 21, 1928), or, as J. A. W. Haas puts it: "Men were never saved by a Bible that was mechanically perfect in its *verbality*." This teaching blacks out the Bible. Fallible men made the choice of the words dealing with the saving truth, and "we do not know," says L. A. Weigle, "whether the words of the Bible given us are true or accurate." And Seeberg assured us that "there can be no doubt that the Biblical authors could certainly draw conclusions intrinsically false from inspired truth." See how completely this theory of the moderns destroys the trustworthiness of our Bible even in its religious statements! Statements made by fallible men! And there is no way to tell "what is of the *form* of revelation and what is of the *substance*. It may be that an infallibly exact criterion has not been given us." (E. Lewis.) "No one knows," declares Grau, "how much is divine, how much human." No one knows how much of John 3:16 is absolutely reliable; the *words* are not absolutely reliable. The Bible is com-

323) Haley is not a discrepancy-hunter. On the contrary, he takes the discrepancy-hunters severely to task. "Moreover, I may be allowed to say that, the more thoroughly I have investigated the subject, the more clearly have I seen the flimsy and disingenuous character of the objections alleged by infidels. . . . One can scarcely read the pronouncements of these three (Strauss, Colenso, and Theodore Parker) and some others of their school without the conviction that the animus of these writers is often felicitously expressed by the old Latin motto, slightly modified: 'I will either find a discrepancy, or I will make one. *Aut inveniam discrepantiam, aut faciam.*'" (P. X, 25.)

pletely blacked out! — What a disreputable thing our Bible has become! It is, according to the moderns, an indistinguishable compound of truth and error, as far as secular matters are concerned. And as far as religious truth is concerned, it is the same indistinguishable mixture of the divine and the human. "Those who reject the Church doctrine of inspiration in favor of some lowered form have never been able to agree among themselves as to which parts of the Bible are inspired and which are not or to what extent any part is inspired." (L. Boettner, *The Inspiration of the Scriptures*, p. 82.) Such a Bible cannot serve us. "In short, if we should doubt the verbal inspiration of the Bible, namely, that the very words of Holy Scripture are God-breathed, the Bible would certainly be useless to us; for in that case we should certainly be assailed by doubts as to whether or not the human writers had really used the correct terms in setting forth the holy and sublime subject matter." (Pieper, *What Is Christianity?* P. 235.)

Put it this way: How much of the Bible is inspired? How much of it is worth keeping? The liberals say, Nothing is inspired. And the conservatives say, Nothing is inspired. These conservatives will tell us that, while they follow the liberals in rejecting many portions of the Bible as noninspired, they hold, in opposition to the liberals, that the religious portions are inspired. We must tell them that they do not in reality teach even that. "Nein, die Neueren leugnen im Grunde auch die Inspiration jener 'ewigen Heils-gedanken.'" (Stoeckhardt, *Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 313.) Our Bible, as it happens, is made up of words. Take the words away, and no Bible is left; but our moderns stoutly maintain that these words — including the Gospel words — are not inspired. "The Word," says J. A. W. Haas, "is not built up out of inspired words." (*Luth. Church Quart.*, 1937, p. 279.) If you want to get the "Word," which is, they say, the real heart of Scripture, you must not look for words. The moderns ought in all fairness no longer confuse the Church by using the term "inspiration of the Bible." The Bible, which consists of words, is *not inspired* if the words are not inspired. James Orr, not at all a verbal-inspirationist, understands the matter perfectly and declares: "If there is inspiration at all, it must penetrate words as well as thought, must mold the expression." (*Revelation and Inspiration*, p. 209.) The verbal-inspirationist Dr. J. A. Dell, too, cannot understand why the moderns persist in keeping the term "inspiration" in their vocabulary. "The readers of this magazine (*Journal of Theol. of the A. L. Conf.*) will remember that I have shivered more than one lance in defense of the term 'verbal inspiration,' holding that, if the words are not inspired, the Bible is not inspired." He then

goes on to show what meaning the moderns attach to their "inspiration" and that such an "inspired" Bible is useless.³²⁴⁾ The moderns ought to tell us openly what they are attacking. The attack on verbal inspiration, as Spurgeon once put it, is only the verbal form of the attack on inspiration itself.

The issue on which the battle for Verbal Inspiration is being fought is this: Shall we retain our old Bible or make us a new Bible? In those territories which the moderns have conquered men are practically writing new Bibles. "Every man is excogitating his own Bible." (Spurgeon.)³²⁵⁾ Moffat has just told us what process they apply.

They are asking us to give up our verbally inspired Bible and accept one which is to the half a human product. Do we realize what deadly woe the old evil Foe means? Walther realized it. "Beware, I say, of this 'divine-human Scripture.' It is a devil's mask; for at last it manufactures such a Bible after which I certainly would not care to be a Bible Christian, namely, that the Bible should henceforth be no more than any other good book, a book which I should have to read with constant sharp discrimination in order not to be led into error. . . . In a word, it is unspeakable what the devil seeks by this 'divine-human Scripture.'" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 76.)

Luther realized it. "If this be the attitude of Rome" [if this be

324) "What, then, does Dr. Moffatt, who calls the 'theory of verbal inspiration' a caricature, believe concerning this written record? He says: 'We may say that, as God's self-revelation enters into history and experience to carry out His purpose and to realize His will, preeminently through the life of Christ on earth, the Word cannot be confined to its immediate and original audience. These recipients attest it, but they do not exhaust its significance. In their testimony lies a historical guarantee of its characteristic qualities. But also through them the revelation is transmitted, it is communicated afresh to successive generations, and Scripture, or the written Word, is a vital factor in the process. The point with me is, Is it a reliable factor in the process of transmitting God's self-revelation to successive generations? Can I today rely on its statements (conveyed in words) as true? If it is a patchwork of the opinions of uninspired men, I could have little confidence in it.' (See CONC. THEOL. MTHLY., XII, p. 304.)

325) Let us hear the whole passage from Spurgeon. It covers other sections, too, of this article. "To Luther Scripture was the last court of appeal. If any had convinced Luther of error out of that Book, he would gladly have retracted; but that was not their plan; they simply said, 'He is a heretic: condemn him or make him retract.' To this he never yielded for an instant. Alas, in this age numbers of men are setting up their own inspired writers. I have been told that every man who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client; and I am inclined to think that, when any man sets up to be his own Savior and his own revelation, much the same thing occurs. That conceited idea is in the air at present—every man is excogitating his own Bible. Not so Luther. He loved the sacred Book! He fought by its help. It was his battle-ax and his weapon of war. A text of Scripture fired his soul; but the words of tradition he rejected."

the attitude of the moderns], "then blessed be the land of Greece, blessed be the land of Bohemia, blessed be all those who have separated themselves and gone out from this Babylon. . . . As matters now stand, faith has been extinguished in her midst, the Gospel proscribed, Christ banished, and the morals are worse than barbarian. Still there remained one hope: the inviolable authority of Holy Scripture remained; men had at least the right view of the Bible, though not the right understanding of its sense. But now Satan is capturing this, too, the stronghold of Zion and the tower of David, unconquered up till now." (XVIII:425 f.)

The Church is in deadly peril. Let us repeat that in this form: she is facing the *loss of all Christian theology*. The Christian doctrine is based on the authority and trustworthiness of the Bible, and when the authority of the Bible is undermined, the Christian doctrine cannot stand.

Or put it this way: the principles on which the anti-inspirationists operate, the principle that science and the "Christian consciousness" have a voice in the interpretation of Scripture, that the *words* do not count because that would involve a "mechanical" inspiration and would lead to an atomistic and legalistic-literalistic use of Scripture, these principles lead, wherever they are consistently applied, to the nullification of all Christian doctrines. In the words of Dr. Pieper: "The result is that modern theology has lost the divine truth. It has renounced Holy Scripture as the infallible truth and the sole authority and has corrupted all the chief articles of the Christian doctrine, taking the very heart out of them." (*Proc., Del. Synod*, 1899, p. 34.)³²⁶

The termites are boring into the inside of the sills on which the house rests and devouring their structure. If they are not destroyed, the edifice of the Christian doctrine will fall.

We have already, more than once, dealt with this matter. Now we would emphasize one particular point: the denial of Verbal Inspiration does away with the *certainty of doctrine*. Where the moderns have substituted doctrines of their own making for the Biblical doctrines, they cannot, of course, speak with assurance. But even where they have retained some or many of the Christian doctrines, the divine assurance of their absolute truth is lacking. In the words of Dr. Pieper: "All who refuse to 'identify' Scripture and the Word of God, that is, all who deny the inspiration of

326) In the Introduction to Graebner's *The Problem of Lutheran Union* Dr. J. H. C. Fritz writes: "Recently, in one of its official publications, the *Lutheran Church Quarterly*, issue of January, 1935, the United Lutheran Church resented the very idea of doctrinal purity, and by denying the verbal inspiration of the *Scriptures* it removes on its part the very foundation for it."

Scripture, practically make the entire Christian doctrine, the very center of it, too, uncertain." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1928, p. 369.)

For these men do not believe that a doctrine is certain and absolutely true simply because Scripture teaches it. We believe that. Scripture, being the Word of God, given by inspiration, is the "sure Word," 2 Pet. 1:19. That guarantees the certitude of its teachings and gives us divine assurance. "*Homo est certus passive, sicut Verbum Dei est certum active.*" (Luther.) But the moderns, denying that the Scripture is the Word of God, cannot but deny, and do deny, that it is a sure word. They cannot, and do not want to, treat its statements as conclusive and infallible.

And will their substitute Bible supply the certitude of doctrine? The moderns base what they have retained of the Christian doctrine not on the words of Scripture but on the *Schriftganze*, on the "Word of God" hidden in Scripture. They base their doctrine on what their "Christian consciousness" has discovered to be this "Word of God." He who bases his teaching on "the infallibility of the letter of Scripture," says Ladd, finds himself "in the most insecure of all positions." It takes the "Christian consciousness, the spiritually illumined Christian reason and conscience, to discern the Word." (*What Is the Bible?* Pp. 453, 456, 468.) "Final authority," says the *Lutheran Church Quarterly*, 1935, p. 263 f., "is found in the final analysis within the soul. . . . Here the teacher of religion finds his authority. His message is an unceasing "Thus saith the Lord," and he speaks with confidence, not because he quotes a scripture, but because the word of God has found him." So, then, all that the moderns offer as the guarantee of the truth of their doctrine is the testimony of their reason, their experience, their feeling. Back of their "Thus saith the Lord" is the "Thus saith a fallible man."

The theology of the anti-inspirationists is from beginning to end a theology of uncertainty and doubt. It is throughout guess-work. They do not *know* how much of the Bible is of the substance of revelation and how much is the human forms. *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (rather liberal) states: "Als die Behauptung, dass alle Woerter der Heiligen Schrift eingegeben seien (Verbalinspiration) im 18. Jahrhundert zusammengebrochen war, war zwar der Glaube an die Sachinspiration geblieben, aber man wusste nicht sicher zu sagen, um welche Sache oder Sachen es sich handle." (P. 297.) The moderns have to guess at that. And when they have agreed that a certain passage must have a divine substance, Grau and Lewis tell us that there is no way of finding out how much of, say, John 3:16 belongs to the form (fallible human words) and what constitutes substance, the divine concept. You must guess at that.

More than that, the moderns cheerfully admit that their guess is probably wrong. What makes the guess is, according to their theology, the "Christian consciousness"; that finds the real Word of God in Scripture, tests the doctrinal statements of Scripture, formulates the Christian doctrine. But—this Christian consciousness changes with each generation. Their prophet Schleiermacher says so.³²⁷⁾ H. F. Rall speaks in the same strain: "Leaders tried to establish authoritative forms . . . of belief which should remain unchanged; but the Church itself never remained exactly the same in any two generations. . . . Christianity has been a religion of freedom and change and advance. . . . We do not stop with Christ, but He gives us the line of advance." (*A Faith for Today*, pp. 38, 50.) There are doctrines, too, we are told, concerning which the Christian consciousness has not yet come to a definite conclusion. "Die Kirche hat noch nicht gesprochen." "There are certain doctrines in which the Church has not made a final pronouncement" (*The Lutheran Companion*, March 30, 1939); and it will never make a final pronouncement on these doctrines or on any of the doctrines, for the Christian consciousness, the framer of the Christian doctrines, is forever changing its mind. Do not expect the moderns to give you a definite, fixed, stable system of doctrine. They cannot say: "This is the real Word of God," and: "Hoc verbum Dei manet in aeternum." A man trained in the school of Schleiermacher, Hofmann, and Ladd speaks in this wise: What I tell you about sin and grace may be wrong; another generation may give us a better system of truth.³²⁸⁾

327) "Dr. Patton, in his new book *Fundamental Christianity*, thus characterizes Schleiermacher's position: 'According to Schleiermacher, the New Testament is the record of the Christian consciousness of the apostolic age; but the Christian consciousness of a later age may be different, and in so far as it may differ, it has a right to supersede the record of the Christian consciousness of the early Church. The outcome of this principle would be that, the Christian consciousness being in a state of constant flux, no one can predict what the consciousness of the next age will affirm, and therefore no one can put much confidence in what the Christian consciousness of the present age affirms.' (*Theol. Mthly.*, VI, p. 373.)

328) Let us add a note on the stupendous folly of this modern principle: the doctrine changes in line with the changing Christian consciousness. Its basic thought is that everything human is subject to change and that, since it is human to err, the change is desirable.—To be sure, anything of human contrivance is in need of improvement. We have no fault to find with Thomas Jefferson's principle that the constitution of a free people should provide within itself an opportunity for each generation to revise it completely. It is a fine thing when the civic and political consciousness of a people rises to higher levels. But we certainly find fault with Schleiermacher's application of this principle to the field of doctrine. Our doctrinal Constitution was not framed by fallible men but by the infallible Lord. Again, the school of Schleiermacher (the moderns) forget that there is something about man that

The theology of the moderns is uncertain, unstable, undecided, and they are proud of this fact. They tell us that this is the ideal situation. R. Sockman: " 'Man', says Middleton Murray, 'cannot accept certainties; he must discover them.' . . . When we start on the search for religious certainty and authority, we must realize that we travel in the realm of values and cannot, therefore, demonstrate absolute proof. . . . To be 'dead certain' would be deadly." (*Recoveries in Religion*, p. 36 f.) G. A. Buttrick: "Meanwhile we should frankly admit the bankruptcy of 'literal infallibility' and, under guidance of the facts, set out *on the long hard quest for truth*." (See CONC. THEOL. MTHLY, XII, p. 223.) J. S. Whale repeats "Lessing's profound remark: 'If God held in His right hand all truth and in His left only the ever-active impulse to search for truth, even with the condition that I must always make mistakes, and said to me, "Choose!" I should humbly bow before His left hand and say, "Father, give me this. Pure truth belongs to Thee alone."'" (*The Chr. Answer to Prayer*, p. 49.) Says the *Watchman-Examiner*: "We have come upon the blessed day of the 'open mind,' which means that we have no convictions any more, but opinions only, that is, that we hold our faith so lightly that we can easily let go of it and take hold of some other notion if the wind of popular favor changes; we are 'blown about by every wind of doctrine,' as the uncompromising apostle says." Do not ask the anti-inspirationists for a fixed system of truth.

What role would the Church play in the world if the moderns had their way? No longer "the pillar and ground of truth" (1 Tim. 3:15), proclaiming clearly and loudly the eternal truth committed to her, she would be turned into a debating society which discusses important questions but never reaches a conclusion. Listen to the wrangling, jangling voices! Should the deity of Christ be taught? Yes, says the affirmative side, Paul taught it. No, say the Anomoeans; Paul was there speaking only as a man. Is man justified by faith alone? Paul taught it, indeed, but the Christian consciousness of a later, the papistic, generation found that idea intolerable, and it won by a majority vote. The moderns are pleased that the issue is not yet settled. Luther thought he had the right idea, but the Christian consciousness of the present generation wants the works drawn in again and is finding wide support. No issue can be settled in this debating society. It is no

does not change. His sinful nature and the great need resulting therefrom do not change. If in some future generation man's sinful nature should change for the better, we should need an improved system of doctrine. Again, the "Christian consciousness" that changes and then changes the Christian doctrine, is not a Christian consciousness. Finally, it is the Christian doctrine which forms the Christian consciousness, not vice versa.

use to quote Scripture on any doctrine. The dissenter has the right, in this debating society, to veto it with the magic formula: Legalistic! Literalism!

The church of the moderns plays a sorry role in the affairs of men. It has lost the voice of authority. It has lost its power. Its preachers are unable to say: *Haec dixit Dominus*. In the old Church no one was permitted to preach who was not sure of his doctrine, sure of its being God's doctrine. "Think of Luther's words in *Wider Hans Worst*" [St. L. ed., XVII:1343] "in which he says that a preacher should 'declare boldly with St. Paul and all the apostles and prophets: "Haec dixit Dominus, God Himself hath said this.'" And again: 'In this sermon I have been an apostle and prophet of Jesus Christ. Here it is not necessary, not even good, to ask for the forgiveness of sins. For it is God's Word, not mine, and so there can be no reason for His forgiving me; He can only confirm and praise what I have preached, saying: "Thou hast taught correctly, for I have spoken through thee, and the Word is mine." Anyone who cannot say this of his own preaching should stop, for he must surely be lying and blaspheming God when he preaches.'" (H. Sasse, *Here We Stand*, p. 161.) In the new Church such assurance is taboo. Men are horrified when a man ascends the pulpit of this church and cries out: "I place over against all sentences of the fathers, men, angels, devils . . . solely the Word of the eternal majesty, the Gospel. . . . That is God's Word, not ours. Here I stand, here I stay, here I make my boast, here I triumph, here I defy the papists, the Thomists, the Heinzists, Sophists, and all the gates of hell. God's Word is above all, the divine majesty is on my side." (Luther, XIX:337.) Luther would not be permitted to teach in the seminary of the new Church. Luther who said: "A theologian and preacher must not say: 'Lord, forgive me if I have taught what is wrong'; but of everything that he teaches in public and writes he must be sure that it is God's Word." (XXII:1507.) The seminary authorities would tell him: No man can be sure how much of Scripture is God's Word.

This new Church has lost the voice of authority, has lost its power. For "how is it possible for a preacher to be a power for God whose source of authority is his own reason and convictions" (*Fundamentals* III, p. 111), his Christian consciousness, his guess at what the Bible means? Dr. Clarence E. Macartney refuses to have any dealings with this debating society. "When Luther said: 'Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. So help me God,' he was taking his stand upon the Scriptures. But where does the Protestant Church today stand as to the Scriptures? Does it stand anywhere? And when the authority of the Scriptures is gone, all that we have is a vague 'I think so.' Human wisdom and specula-

tion is a poor substitute for a "Thus saith the Lord.' " "Those who have departed from faith in an infallible Bible have made desperate, but utterly vain efforts to secure a suitable substitute and other standing ground. . . . No one can preach with the power and influence of him who draws a sword bathed in heaven and who goes into the pulpit with a 'Thus saith the Lord.' " (See CONC. THEOL. MTHLY., V, p. 398; VIII, p. 395. L. Boettner, *op. cit.*, p. 81.)

Those who attend divine services in the new Church planned by the moderns are badly served. In his parable of the soldiers casting lots Luther quotes Eph. 4:14 and remarks: "Κύβεια [sleight] is originally dice-playing and here means just this, that they use the words of God like dice, find no certainty in them, but make them serve all manner of varying opinions. . . . For what other effect can these wavering opinions and uncertain teachings have than that they toss us who are children to and fro, carry us hither and yon, force and drive us whither they will?" (IV:1310.)

The poor people sing: "*Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier, Dich and dein Wort anzuhoeren*"; we would hear the Word of Jesus! They are told by the preacher: The word of Jesus is hidden somewhere in Scripture, but the Christian consciousness of our theologians has not yet discovered the exact wording of it; wait till the Church has spoken.

The people ask: How much of what you are preaching is the absolute truth? The preachers tell them: Some of our preaching is not exactly the truth,³²⁹⁾ and the truths we do preach are more or less guesswork.

The Church would suffer a mortal hurt if Verbal Inspiration were lost. Why, there are men who deny Verbal Inspiration but still feel compelled to warn against accepting low views of inspiration. J. W. Haley advocates the concept theory and the partial-inspiration theory. "There is no need to ask whether everything

329) *Prophecy's Light on Today*, by C. G. Trumbull, p. 95: "A devoted Christian woman, who was a teacher in the Sunday school of a well-known church, went to her pastor one day to talk with him about doctrinal matters. She explained to him, inasmuch as she was very old-fashioned in her beliefs and was teaching the children in the Primary Department that the Bible was just what it claims to be, she wondered whether her pastor would really want to have her continue her work there or give it up. He assured her that he wished her to stay right on in her Sunday-school work there, saying: 'Most assuredly I do. I believe in teaching little children the Bible stories just as they are and, *when they are older, teach them the truth.*' " We heard the statement of a prominent Lutheran theologian: "Pupils may later discard the scientific import of the story." We heard the statement of Christendom: "The account of the Creation in Genesis, . . . the Christmas story of the Incarnation, . . . the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, . . . are still scrupulously retained, lovingly cherished, but considered as poetic expressions of some profounder or larger truth than that which their formulators realized." (I, p. 492.)

contained in the writings of the apostles was immediately suggested by the Spirit or not. . . . For these things were not of a religious nature, and no inspiration was necessary concerning them." And now mark his words: "We will simply add that the view of inspiration exhibited in the foregoing extracts, while it very well meets certain exigencies of the case, seems nevertheless peculiarly liable to be misunderstood and abused. *There is ever far greater danger to be apprehended from a lax than from a strict theory of inspiration.*" (Op. cit., p. 158. — Our italics.) And E. Grubb (extreme liberal) gives this cold-blooded diagnosis of the case: "Nor can we find in the Bible, any more than in the Church, a final and infallible standard of truth or duty. The Bible . . . is not infallible." And now: "The new view does not, it may be urged, give the same certainty as the old." And Grubb is pleased to have it so. He continues: "But, if the old is becoming incredible, what then? May we not be meant to understand that the desire for infallibility is itself unhealthy?" (*The Bible, Its Nature and Inspiration*, p. 239 f.)

Edwin Lewis wants certainty of doctrine. "'Give us a sure word!' this is the cry which we daily hear. . . . Tell us, is there nowhere one word which stands above all other words, no truth of rocklike quality, which nothing can move? . . . Tell us, must we always flounder, must we always be experimenters, must we always build up only to tear down?" And he destroys all certainty of the Christian doctrine when he declares: "Without a doubt our fathers came very close to Bibliolatry; they could make no distinction between the Word of God and the words of men by which that Word was given." (*The Faith We Declare*, pp. 49, 188.)

Georgia Harkness declares: "There is nothing a Christian minister wants more than to be able to say the right things and to say them with authority." And how shall he find the truth? By applying the methods of liberal theology? No; for "liberal theology, by moving so far in the direction of capitulation to the scientific method, almost lost its soul." By relying on the statements of the Bible? No; for "the belief in the literal inspiration of the Bible" is "a great pitfall." How shall we, then, arrive at the truth and obtain certainty? Mark the tragedy of the answer given: "There is no neat formula." "There is nothing a Christian minister wants more than to be able to say the right things and to say them with authority. How shall we do it? There is no neat formula." (*The Faith by Which the Church Lives*, pp. 46, 57, 142.) — A theology which refuses to base its teachings on the word of Scripture has lost its soul, its power, its authority, its convictions.

Do we realize how much is at stake? At the Washington Debate the spokesman of the American Lutheran Church told the

spokesman of the U. L. C.: "If behind Inspiration is placed a question mark, then all Christian doctrine is questionable." (See CONC. THEOL. MTHLY., IX, p. 363.)

Do we realize how much Satan is interested in this matter? Dr. Bente writes in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1902, p. 130: "Today Satan is striking not so much at individual doctrines but rather at the foundation of all doctrines, at Scripture itself. . . . By yielding up the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture the Church would abandon every Christian doctrine to the whim and caprice of men. Nothing could give Satan and the enemies of the Church greater pleasure than to find that here in the Lutheran Church of America, too, as in that of Germany, this truth is being questioned or denied. It may at first sight seem an unwarranted statement, but it is actually so: the denial of the doctrine of inspiration overthrows the Christian theology. The Christian doctrines may indeed still stand for a time; but the entire theological edifice is undermined and hollowed out if it is no longer borne by the inspired, infallible word of Scripture. . . . If the theologian gives up the inspiration of Scripture, the old mighty γένεται has lost its force and value for him. If the Bible is no longer the infallible Word of God but a human fallible record of the things of which it treats, the *loci classici* and *dicta probantia* are no longer of any avail. A veritable deluge of all manner of skeptical questions concerning the origin and content of Scripture is unloosed, which cannot be checked and controlled."

Have we the full sense of the grave peril confronting the Church? Here is the plain truth: the denial of Verbal Inspiration is *destructive of Christianity*. It involves the loss of the Bible; this carries with it the loss of the Christian doctrine; and all of that means the destruction of the Christian religion.

The Christian Church stands or falls with Verbal Inspiration. That was Dr. Walther's judgment. "Walther not only espoused, with sincere conviction, the doctrine of inspiration as the old Church maintained it, but also characterized the relinquishment of this doctrine as virtual apostasy from Christianity." (Pieper in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1888, p. 193. See also *L. u. W.*, 1911, p. 152.) We had his statement above: "With the Biblical doctrine of the inspiration of Holy Scripture stand or fall the certainty, truth, and divine character of Scripture itself *and of the entire Christian religion*." The Church would commit suicide if she renounced Verbal Inspiration.

The Christian religion, objectively considered, the teachings of Christianity, cannot be maintained where Verbal Inspiration is abandoned. We have just finished discussing that point.

Nor can Christianity, subjectively considered, the Christian

faith, the faith of the believer, stand where Verbal Inspiration falls. Let us now discuss this phase of it. We say that, when men deny that Scripture is verbally inspired, is the very Word of God, they are removing the foundation on which saving faith rests. "The denial of the inspiration of Scripture has these results: (1) We give up the knowledge of the Christian truth. . . . (2) We relinquish faith in the Christian sense, since the Christian faith can exist only *vis-à-vis* the Word of God. . . ." (Pieper, *Chr. Dog.*, I, p. 369.) That is one of the elementary truths of Christian theology. In the days of the old rationalism Woltersdorf gave expression to it in the lines:

Wenn dein Wort nicht mehr soll gelten,
Worauf soll der Glaube ruhn?
Mir ist's nicht um tausend Welten,
Sondern um dein Wort zu tun.

In the present day of the new rationalism *Signs of the Times* (March 26, 1940) gives expression to it in these words: "With the poet we say,

O Lord and Master of us all,
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine.

But *how can we hear His call* unless we believe in the inspiration of His message through the Bible? We must conclude that, if we discard the Bible, we deny Christianity." Faith rests on the inspired Scriptures.

On the verbally inspired Scriptures — that is another elementary truth of Christian theology. Rather, it is the same truth. Unless Scripture is verbally inspired, it is not inspired at all. And only because it is verbally inspired, is it the firm foundation of faith. The old rationalists presented the Bible as a purely human book. And Woltersdorf asked: Can faith rest on a human book? The moderns present the Bible as partly divine, partly human. And we ask, Can faith rest on declarations and doctrines which come to us in fallible human words? Ponder the words President C. C. Hein spoke at Copenhagen: "To the Lutheran Church the Bible as a whole as well as in all its parts is the pure and infallible Word of God, for the reason that the Holy Spirit has inspired it. The Lutheran Church does not distinguish between Scripture and the Word of God. . . . When we no longer hold fast the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, . . . the very foundation of our faith will have been undermined. Instead of being built upon something objectively certain, *viz.*, the eternal truth of God's Word, faith will be based upon something subjectively uncertain and liable to change, such as experience or ecclesiastical group consciousness. Yes, 'what shall be my faith's foundation when Thy Word no more avails?' (Woltersdorf.)" (*The Second Lutheran World Convention*, p. 75. — See also CONC. THEOL. MTHLY., XIII, p. 609.)

Faith rests on the Word, *on the certain Word*. There can be no faith, *no assurance of faith*, if, as the moderns will have it, no man can know with certainty how much of John 3:16 and 1 John 2:1, 2, etc., belongs to the substance, to God's truth, and how much belongs to the form, man's fallible record of it. But "faith" which remains in doubt is not the Christian faith. In his parable of the soldiers casting lots Luther calls attention to this fact. "Faith, if it be not real assurance, is not faith at all." IV:1309.)³³⁰⁾ Faith, indeed, always struggles with doubt; but if it be nothing but doubt, it is not faith at all. And the "faith" produced by the modern view of Scripture is, in its very essence, uncertainty and doubt. The modern view of Scripture is most certainly destructive of the Christian faith. In the words of B. B. Warfield: "The trustworthiness of the Scriptures lies at the foundation of trust in the Christian system of doctrine, and is therefore fundamental to the Christian hope and life. *The validity of the Christian's hope in the several promises of the Gospel rests on the trustworthiness of the Bible.* . . . Such a Word of God Christ and His apostles offer us when they give us the Scriptures, not as man's report to us of what God says, but as the very Word of God itself, spoken by God Himself through human lips and pens." (*Revelation and Inspiration*, pp. 66, 71.)

President J. W. Behnken in the tract *Come, See!* p. 13: "If the Bible is not the dependable, inerrant Word of God, do you realize that we would have no solid foundation for our faith? Oh, what a blessed assurance to know that our Redeemer 'without if or and' taught that the Bible is God's Word. . . . He said to His Father: 'Thy Word is truth' (not Thy Word *contains* truth)."

Examine once again the statement of G. Wehrung and the many similar ones quoted above: "Faith refuses to make a legalistic use of individual passages or of the entire Scripture. . . . We must apply this touchstone to every word of Scripture: Does it give expression to the Gospel as Gospel, the pure and clear Gospel?" E. Schaefer: "The Spirit-wrought faith applies a sifting process to the Bible-word. Through this sifting process it gets the Word of God, the Word of Christ." But if the words are not reliable as they stand, if the unreliable "religious self-consciousness" must find what is reliable, "faith" never reaches assurance. The faith grown by the moderns is not the Christian faith.

The faith grown by the moderns, relying upon an indefinite, unreliable Scripture, cannot stand in the day of spiritual affliction.

330) Luther is speaking of the Romish theology, but his words fit modern theology exactly. "What a dreadful picture! Not only is the voice of the Gospel silenced, but also the letter of it is made doubtful. . . . And these are the men whom all the world acclaims as the best teachers just because they teach that everything is uncertain, while we know that faith, if it be not real assurance, is not faith at all."

Recall Walther's words: "When he is facing death and reaches out for some verse of Scripture to uphold him, Satan will whisper to him: Who knows whether that particular passage is God's Word? It may belong in the erroneous section of the Bible. You cannot rely on it; you cannot die on it." Again: "It is not a small matter when a poor man is lying on his deathbed, seeks comfort in a passage of Scripture and Satan assaults him with the question: Yea, how do you know that God said that? May not the writer have misunderstood the Holy Spirit?" (*Proc. Iowa Dist.*, 1891, pp. 27, 61. *Lehre und Wehre*, 1911, p. 155.)

Is it, then, impossible for one who denies Verbal Inspiration to have the true Christian saving faith? God can bring such a one to faith and keep him in it. God performs miracles. By God's grace such a one clings to Scripture in spite of the *dictum* of his mind that Scripture is unreliable. Such a one, denying Verbal Inspiration, believes in it and practices it—he accepts Scripture as it stands as God's Word. But that is not the result of the teaching of the moderns. The denial of Verbal Inspiration can result, in and by itself, only in killing the assurance of faith, that is, killing faith itself. We repeat, in the solemn words of Stoeckhardt: "The teaching that the Bible is not the very Word of God robs the Christian of all comfort and all assurance. One who holds that the Bible is a book which has a divine and a human side, may easily, in the day of distress, in the hour of death, sink into despair. When he looks to, say, John 3:16, Satan may challenge him: Where is your guarantee that this word is not one of the human ingredients of Scripture, that God's love for the whole world of sinners is not merely a pious wish and self-delusion? But we believe that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God'; we can, by the grace of God, make the right use of the 'It is written'; with this weapon we can repel Satan, fell him with one little word." (*Proc. Central Dist.*, 1894, p. 21.)

Does the denial of Verbal Inspiration touch the heart of Christianity? Rudelbach declares: "Der Begriff der Eingebung der Heiligen Schrift gehoert mit zu den Wurzeln der Kirche und ist mit den Herznerven derselben verflochten." (*Zeitsch. f. die ges. luth. Theologie u. Kirche*, 1841, viertes Q. H., p. 1.) The moderns are uprooting the Christian doctrine and the Christian's faith.

The churches are today wandering about in the desert of uncertainty. J. H. Leckie declares in his *Authority in Religion*: "Religion without certainty is religion without strength." (P. 64.) Now Leckie is doing all that he can do to destroy the Christian's trust in the reliability of the Bible. "It is certainly true that the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy and plenary inspiration, in the old sense, is among the things that have been and the powers that are

dead." (P. 50.) In its place he and his confreres are offering the Church this substitute: "The ideal organ of authority in religion must be found in the soul of man, in that secret place of its life where the voice of God is heard, . . . in the 'religious consciousness.'" (Pp. 76, 81.) What is the result? Let Leckie himself tell us: "There is much confusion and a great unrest. Some are preaching the Gospel in exactly the old forms and assuring themselves that the old dogmatic foundations remain; . . . others are striving to make the general sense of the Scriptures the ultimate rule of faith; and others are still crying, 'Back to the historic Christ!' while many are going on in the way of their fathers, keeping to the ancient paths, but haunted by a constant doubt that the basis of belief is gone. Perhaps this state of uncertainty, of varied and doubtful answers, is a necessity of the time. It may be that the Church must even wander a while in the desert: it may be that the word of reconciliation cannot be spoken till the thought and research of this age have performed their perfect work, till the uses of its labors are done. . . ." (P. 54.) — And when that distant day arrives, if the Christians should agree to accept the "religious consciousness" as the organ of authority, all of them would verily be wandering in the desert, chasing after a will-o'-the-whisp.

J. W. Haley writes: "A celebrated infidel is said to have exclaimed in his last moments, 'I am about to take a leap in the dark.' Cast the Bible aside, and every man at death takes a leap in the dark." (Op. cit., p. 52.) Haley takes the rationalists severely to task. But mark the tragedy! If his own theory is correct, if only the concepts, and not the words, are inspired, the Christian at death must take a 'leap in the dark.'"

Edwin Lewis writes: "If the Christian preacher has reached the conclusion that the Bible is nothing at all but a collection of ancient literature of varying degrees of excellence, of what use is it to talk of the Bible as the bearer to men of the Word of God; of what use is it to seek to find in its pages a truth which is authoritative for the whole of life; of what use is it for him to expound one of its great passages, he harboring in his own mind all the time the suspicion that the passage represents only one more human guess, and creating in the mind of his hearer a similar suspicion?" (Op. cit., p. 191.) But when Dr. Lewis tells his hearers that they must distinguish between the Word of God and the words of men by which that Word was given (see above), and that "the claim of revelation has been released from the burden of much unnecessary baggage, the stranglehold of this verbalism has been broken" (*A Philosophy of the Chr. Rel.*, p. 35), he cannot but create in their minds the suspicion that John 3:16 is not altogether trustworthy; the words are mere human words, guesses at what the real Word of God might be.

In his book *Faith Under Fire*, which contains his talks to men in the various Civilian Defense services in England, Michael Coleman says: "People are asking questions about God. What do they want to know? 'Know' is the important word: men and women long to 'know,' not merely that belief in a God is probable and reasonable, but to 'know' God Himself." (P. 8.) And now mark what he tells these poor people on page 48: "So many people imagine that the Bible being the word of God means that God, as it were, wrote it Himself, or held the pen of the human writers. The real truth surely is that God continually revealed and man continually attempted to understand, and sometimes only half understood, the truth that was there. So in the Bible we shall expect to find not only God's truth, which is always eternally true, but also man's sometimes erring ways of expressing truth." Can "faith" which is based on such a book stand under fire?

Are they making sport of the anxious inquirer, of the distressed Christian? "Gute Gewissen schreien nach der Wahrheit, . . . und denselben ist der Tod nicht so bitter, als bitter ihnen ist, wo sie etwa in einem Stuecke zweifeln. There are many good men to whom this doubt is more bitter than death." (Apology, Conc. Trigl., p. 290 f.) The Christian cries out: My faith will die unless it find assurance in a sure word; and these men tell him: It is your faith, your Christian consciousness, which must make the word of Scripture sure.

And what are they making of God? Is He, too, making sport of the distressed Christians? He gives them His Word for their stay and anchor and when they would cling to it, does He tell them that these words may have a different meaning from that which the holy writers put into them, that they must not make an atomistic and legalistic use of these passages?

"*O furor et amentia his saeculis digna!*" (Luther, XIX:620.) Luther was stirred to holy wrath and indignation by this fact: "Zuletzt, so sie gestossen sind mit der Schrift, dass sie nicht vor ueber koennen, heben sie an und laestern Gott und sprechen: Sind doch St. Matthaeus, Paulus, Petrus auch Menschen gewesen, darum ihre Lehre auch Menschenlehre. . . . Der Apostel Rede ist ungewiss." (Loc. cit.) What would Luther have said of the present *saeculum*, in which the great majority of the Protestant theologians proclaim that half of the Bible is untrue and that what is true is couched in uncertain language? Let Stoeckhardt say it. "Of a truth, modern theology with its modern theory of inspiration is nothing but a deception of Satan, by means of which the Christians are led away from the sure, prophetic word, from the true Christ, from the true, living God, and cast into doubt, unbelief, damnation. May God protect us against such Satanic snares and keep us in the simplicity of faith." (Lehre und Wehre, 1893, p. 333.)

The Church is indeed engaged in a life-or-death struggle. "Let us not deceive ourselves," says Machen, "the Bible is at the foundation of the Church. Undermine that foundation, and the Church will fall. It will fall, and great will be the fall of it." (*Princeton Theol. Review*, 1915, p. 351.)

Mark the solemn words of Spurgeon: "The turning point of the battle between those who hold 'the faith once delivered to the saints' and their opponents, lies in the true and real inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. This is the Thermopylae of Christendom. If we have in the Word of God no infallible standard of truth, we are at sea without a compass, and no danger from rough weather without can be equal to this loss within. 'If the foundation be removed, what can the righteous do?' And this is a foundation loss of the worst kind." (See J. Horsch, *Modern Religious Liberalism*, p. 31.) The old evil Foe means deadly woe.

The war is on. *Are we, in the second place, prepared for the conflict?* They are not prepared who fail to realize that the age-long battle of the Church for her life is today being fought on the question of inspiration. On this front the enemy is concentrating his forces. He is still attacking the deity of Christ and other fundamental doctrines, but at present he seems to be chiefly concerned about getting the Church to discard Verbal Inspiration. "Die gegenwärtig am meisten bekämpfte und gehasste Lehre ist ohne Zweifel die Lehre von der Verbalinspiration." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1910, p. 89.) This doctrine has always been attacked. The Anomoeans did not like it. Paine and the old rationalists hated it. But at no time has such a concerted and determined effort been made to remove it as in our generation. Here is where the Church must marshal her forces.

Do we realize that the enemy hates and abominates Verbal Inspiration and is sparing no efforts to get the Church to renounce and discard it? The moderns are convinced that Verbal Inspiration is a wicked and a harmful doctrine, and they are determined to drive the "foul spook" out of the Church. They are very tolerant with regard to other doctrines. Their principle is that men must be permitted to teach what they please; but they will not tolerate the teaching of Verbal Inspiration. Here tolerance ceases to be a virtue. Against this doctrine they have declared war to the death. They feel that they are engaged in a holy crusade. "Now, like the knights at the lists of Ashby," shouts J. P. Smyth, "we have to ride openly at each of the tents and strike with ringing blows and with sharp end of the spear the shield of each foe with whom we mean to do battle, for the sake of the Bible and our disquieted brethren." They mean to do battle with the foe who teaches "that an inspired Bible must be absolutely infallible in every detail."

(*How God Inspired the Bible*, p 56 f.) They are exulting over the great conquests they have already made in their holy war — “the claim of revelation has been released from the burden of much unnecessary baggage, the stranglehold of this verbalism has been broken” (E. Lewis) — and go forth to silence the few who still teach Verbal Inspiration. They are filled with indignation and horror that men would still retain “the old theory against the monitions of conscience. . . . The fall of the theory of verbal inspiration is an event of first rate importance. But in ecclesiastical practice men often involuntarily talk as if Verbal Inspiration still held its ground” (Seeberg, *op. cit.*, p. 2, 62). There are the Fundamentalists. They must be driven out. G. Harkness: “The battle against Fundamentalism, against the belief in the literal inspiration of the Bible, is not yet won. Like the poor, literalism is always with us.” (*Op. cit.*, p. 57.) There are the Lutherans in America who must be won over. W. Gussmann: “The day of Verbal Inspiration has passed, and we shall have to tell our American brethren: We cannot turn the course of history backwards.” (*Luth. Zeitblatt*, Jan., 1924.) There are the old-fashioned laymen. They must be rescued. B. Steffen: “While in point of fact Verbal Inspiration has long ago been overthrown by Biblical science, our laymen are tenaciously clinging to it. That is an intolerable situation, which cannot continue.” (*Zentralinspiration*, p. 1.) The moderns are straining every effort to drive out the last defenders of Verbal Inspiration. They are getting ready to deal Verbal Inspiration its deathblow. In fact, “in the report of the Anglican Commission so-called Fundamentalism receives its *coup de grace*.” (*The Living Church*, March 9, 1938.) The moderns have sworn not to rest till that has been accomplished. They are writing books and pamphlets on this subject, and it seems that they cannot write on any subject without coming back to this one subject. They are ridiculing Verbal Inspiration in the seminaries. They are denouncing it from the pulpits. They are attacking it not only in the *Christian Century* and the *Lutheran Church Quarterly*, but also in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, and laymen are joining them in that. — And shall we go on in our easy way, calmly ignoring the ceaseless activity of the foe? Do we feel that long articles on inspiration in our periodicals constitute useless baggage? Are we asking the preacher to discuss more important subjects in the pulpit?

Again, we must know — and be ready to defend — the exact point of attack. That is the inspiration of the words. The moderns are very willing to let us teach that the Bible is inspired and is a good book, a holy book. But they will not have us teach that the words of Scripture were chosen by the Holy Spirit and express the thought as perfectly and infallibly as only God can express it.

They tell us plainly that we must not "make the words of Scripture coextensive and identical with the words of God." Thus Arch-deacon Farrar.³³¹⁾ They know exactly what we teach: "The theory of 'verbal inspiration' maintains that the entire corpus of Scripture consists of writings every word of which was directly 'dictated' by the Deity." Thus C. H. Dodd. (*The Authority of the Bible*, p. 35.) And that is exactly what they denounce. "Der Gedanke der Inspiration von Worten muss aufgegeben werden." Thus F. Buechsel. (*Die Offenbarung Gottes*, p. 115) — Let us not waste our time by defending what nobody attacks. The moderns are willing to let us retain any kind of vague inspiration, if it only be not *Verbal Inspiration*. The strategical point in the battle for the Bible lies here: Is Scripture absolutely infallible? Are the words of Scripture the identical words of God? And were Paul and Christ mistaken in teaching *Verbal Inspiration*?

We must know what the moderns are fighting for. They know exactly what they want. This is their ultimatum: Give up *Verbal Inspiration* and confess that the Bible is full of errors; there can be no peace between us until you let science in its various forms rule over the Bible. See *The Problem of Lutheran Union*, page 118: The *Magazin fuer Ev. Theologie und Kirche* of the former Evangelical Synod discusses *Verbal Inspiration* and quotes a sentence from Dr. Pfotenhauer's address delivered at the dedication of Concordia Seminary. Its comment is: "The Church will either have to say with President Pfotenhauer: 'We hold fast to the doctrine of verbal inspiration' or it will have to say: 'We acknowledge the need of the historical, critical method.' This method is used in our seminary, and we rejoice in it, since that sponsored by Pfotenhauer today is absolutely untenable." Peace will be declared on the day that the Christians declare that the Bible is not absolutely trustworthy.

Furthermore, we need to know where the enemy is to be found. Singapore fell because its guns pointed only one way. The Church is fighting for its life, for *Verbal Inspiration*, against infidels like Ingersoll and Darrow and against the modernists. But there are also, as has been shown above, many among the "positive," the conservative theologians, who attack *Verbal Inspiration* just

331) Farrar makes this demand even though he admits that Paul taught just that. "Paul shared, doubtless, in the views of the later Jewish schools — the Tanaim and Amoraim — on the nature of inspiration — . . . views which made the words of Scripture coextensive and identical with the words of God." But Paul was mistaken! (See Warfield, *op. cit.*, p. 175.) Hermann Schultz declared that Christ, too, was mistaken on this point. See footnote 265. We are here calling attention to this particular matter in order to show to what lengths the moderns will go in their warfare against *Verbal Inspiration*.

as vehemently as the modernists. They have gotten much of their ammunition from the pronounced foes of Christianity. Why, there are even Lutheran theologians who are out to storm this stronghold of Christianity, Verbal Inspiration. *The Theological Forum* (Norw. Luth. Church) wrote in 1934, p. 187: "One of the gravest dangers that are threatening the Christian Church today is that many who profess to be its members no longer accept the Bible as God's inspired Word. Even among Lutherans strange sounds are sometimes heard regarding this subject. 'There are some Lutheran theologians who find it rather difficult to declare unequivocally their exact position on the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Bible. To some of these it seems an unpleasant task to make their position clear.'" Yes, and some have unequivocally declared their exact position. Dr. H. A. Preuss knows who they are. He wrote in the *Lutheran Herald* of Feb. 20, 1935: "Let us awake from our peaceful, smug satisfaction as we tell the world that the Lutheran Church is free from the disease of modernism. . . . Here is a call to arms to the forces of truth against errors, of Lutheran Bible Christians against Lutheran modernists. . . . Then, by the grace of God, the Lutheran brothers in Christ, of whatever nationality and whatever synod, will find themselves fighting shoulder to shoulder for truth against error, *for an infallible Bible against a human book*, for a divine Christ against a mere human Christ." There is a great host of Lutheran theologians who are asking the Church to substitute for an infallible Bible a human, or a partly human book.—We would be remiss in our duty as keepers of the stronghold if we permitted the fact that these conservatives, these Lutherans, do not make common cause with the modernists on every doctrine to blind our eyes to the fact that they are making common cause with these same modernists on the vital doctrine of inspiration. Their work is just as deadly, if not more so.

One more point: we of the Lutheran Church must take our place in the front ranks. There are parties in the Reformed Church, the Fundamentalists and others, who are fighting valiantly for Verbal Inspiration. They are doing this in spite of the fact that in many instances they have departed from the formal principle of the Reformation, the sole authority of Scripture. And shall we lag behind them? do less than they? God expects us to do more than they. The Lutheran Church has shaped its entire *corpus doctrinae* by the formal principle of the Reformation. Lutheranism lives and moves and has its being in God's Word and its sure message of salvation. It is instinctive in Lutheranism to give instant battle to him who infringes on the authority and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture. Understanding fully the *sola*

Scriptura, the Lutheran Church is best equipped to lead in the holy war. God has placed a sacred responsibility upon Lutheranism today. Listen to these burning words: "Should Lutheranism ever relinquish the truth of the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures, by that very act it would surrender the formal principle of the Reformation; for the very essence of that principle is the infallibility of the Scriptures. Then it would cease to be Lutheranism; and Luther's declaration 'The Word of God they shall let stand' would be mere mockery upon our lips, because we should have surrendered our heritage and *our divinely wrought distinctive character*. Oh, that we Lutheran Christians might be conscious not only of this, but also of the high and holy responsibility which God has placed upon Lutheranism today! In this age of unbelief, superstition, error, syncretism, and unionism, of sects and fanatics, may Lutheranism, standing as an immovable rock at the Christian world's very heart through faithful witness-bearing, preserve to the Christian world its own precious Reformation heritage, the Word of God, the whole Word of God, and nothing but the Word of God—the *infallible Word of God* as the only source of faith and the infallible standard for teachers and their teaching." (President Hein at Copenhagen; *loc. cit.*) Lutheranism must lead in the battle for Verbal Inspiration.

Many Lutherans have gone over to the enemy. Let those, then, that remain do *double duty*. Our glorious Lutheran Church must not be let down.

We need to acquaint ourselves in the third place, *with the tactics of the enemy*. Wars are lost when the skill and power of the foe are underrated. "Deep guile and great might are his dread arms in fight." What tactics does he employ in his fight against Verbal Inspiration?

1. He insists that Scripture does not teach Verbal Inspiration. The first attack—the assertion that Scripture does not teach inspiration of any kind—fails in many cases. So a second maneuver is employed: Scripture certainly teaches inspiration, but not Verbal Inspiration. "The Bible itself does not make any claim to infallible authority for all its parts." (C. H. Dodd, *op. cit.*, p.14.) It is "an amazing statement that the Scriptures themselves teach that 'every word' contained in them is inspired by the Holy Ghost." (*The Lutheran World*; see *Lehre und Wehre*, 1904, p. 39.) "There is no assertion in Scripture that their writers were kept 'from error.'" (*Auburn Affirmation*.) How can Scripture teach Verbal Inspiration, they say, since the Bible contains thousands of errors? And this teaching would involve a mechanical inspiration and lead to atomistic and legalistic abuses of Scripture! The moderns would beguile the Christians with the thought that Verbal Inspira-

tion is an unscriptural, an anti-Scriptural teaching and that, when they cast it to the moles and bats, they have Scriptural warrant for doing it.

This guileful attack on Verbal Inspiration is today usually put into this form: Verbal Inspiration is a mere human theory, without basis in Scripture, and must not be foisted on the Church; Scripture teaches the *fact* of inspiration, but does not define its extent; Verbal Inspiration is a theological or dogmatical deduction, not a dogma of Scripture but a theory invented by men. The moderns employ this maneuver on every possible occasion. They never tire of telling the Christians: you must accept the fact of inspiration but need not accept the theory of Verbal Inspiration.³³²⁾ The result

332) For instance, the commissioners of the U.L.C. declared at Baltimore: "The disagreement [on the doctrine of verbal inspiration] relates to a *matter of theological interpretation*." (See *The Lutheran*, Oct. 5, 1938.) *The Augsburg Sunday School Teacher* finds that inspiration is taught in 2 Tim. 3:16, 17, but that the teaching of Verbal Inspiration is "perhaps" due "to an extremist *exegesis*" of this passage. Is Verbal Inspiration a fact or a theory? A. D. Mattson (Augustana Synod) writes in the *Journal of Theol. Am. Luth. Conf.*, 1941, p. 546 f.: "Theologians sometimes fail to make an adequate distinction between a fact and their theory about that fact. . . . The Christians must recognize that the Bible is inspired by the Spirit of God. That is a fact. However, many theories have been advanced as to how God inspired the Bible. . . . All theories of inspiration within the Lutheran Church are the theories of individuals, some more or less adequate. . . . Facts remain, but theories may be transitional." Referring to Verbal Inspiration ("the enslaving legalism of the letter"). W. H. Greever (U.L.C.) writes in *The Lutheran World Almanac* for 1937, p. 94: "The Scriptures declare the fact of inspiration, . . . but make no explanation concerning the issues involved in the 'theories' of form and degree which furnish the material for present-day controversies on the subject. The particular theories which men hold on this subject are, at the most, but deductions from the Scriptures, which, however rational and logical, cannot be demanded, legitimately, as articles of faith." H. W. Snyder (U.L.C.) declared at the Washington Debate, Nov. 1, 1937: "Some of our theologians, on the other hand, accuse the Synodical Conference of lending its weight to the verbal-inspiration theory. . . . There seems to be no question about there being an inspiration, but the manner and extent of it are a matter of dispute." (See *Journal of the Am. Luth. Conf.*, 1938, March issue; *Conc. THEOL. MTHLY.*, 1938, p. 357 ff.) *The Lutheran*, Feb. 20, 1936: "The Lutheran Church has never formulated a theory of inspiration, it has merely stated its fact." *The Luth. Companion*, Dec. 16, 1933: "Does Dr. Lenski mean to imply that the fact of inspiration (which Lutherans accept) must be identified with the theory of verbal inspiration (a theory which is by no means unanimously accepted by consistent Lutherans)? The Lutheran Church has no official theory of inspiration." That applies, they further state, to the Church in general. C. Gore: "The Church never showed any disposition to define the scope of inspiration. There is no authoritative *dogma* about inspiration. There is to be found neither in the Bible nor in the words of the Church any authoritative definition of inspiration. If we are now unwilling to say that the Bible is the Word of God," etc. (*The Doctrine of the Infallible Book*, pp. 47, 62.) — The reader will notice that when the moderns speak of "the form and degree," of "the extent," they mean Verbal Inspiration. The reader will also notice that, when they throw these two terms: "manner and extent" together, they are practising sophistry. Scripture does not reveal the

"manner" of inspiration; it does not tell us "how God inspired the Bible." That was a miracle. Why do they couple these two terms, "manner" and "extent"? Note, finally, that Scripture teaches the fact of inspiration and the fact of Verbal Inspiration. Since Scripture says that all Scripture is given by inspiration, it teaches that all the words are inspired. Scripture does teach "how God inspired the Bible"—in this way that the Holy Spirit spoke the very words of Scripture.—The reader may have time to read and study the following declaration on this matter. J. O. Lang writes in the *Pastor's Monthly* of May, 1935: "We boldly assert that we accept no 'theory' of verbal inspiration, but rather the 'fact' of verbal inspiration. When we speak of a theory of verbal inspiration, we speak of something which may not be true, and we are endeavoring to explain just how it took place, and the 'how' the Church has never attempted to describe because the Bible does not describe it. Inspiration belongs to the sphere of the miraculous. However, when we state our doctrine of verbal inspiration, we are stating the fact which the Scriptures present, namely, that God so directed and controlled the holy writers that they wrote what He wanted them to write and the form in which He wanted it written. This is no 'theory.'" Samuel Miller's letter to Dr. J. A. Dell, published in the *Journal of the A. L. Conf.*, July, 1939, p. 10, states: "I want to thank you for your answer to an article entitled 'Some Thoughts on Inspiration' by Hjalmar W. Johnson. It seems strange that people cannot understand that the term 'verbal inspiration' designates the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible and does not stand for a theory of the mode. I cannot help but wonder if they are ignorant of the meaning of the term or if they are willfully confusing the issue. Surely the Bible plainly states, and the Lutheran Confessions take it for granted, that the words by which God's revelation has been recorded were inspired by the Holy Spirit. It surely is a very subtle way of attack that those of us who hold to the doctrine of verbal inspiration shall now be called 'un-Lutheran' . . ." Dr. J. A. Dell writes in the *Journal of the A. L. Conf.*, Sept., 1938, p. 2: "In the *Lutheran* of June 8 the subject 'Growing Unity' was discussed on the young people's page. There it was said: 'The differences that keep American Lutherans from complete unification are more on the surface than real. All agree that the Scriptures are inspired. But some insist that some certain method of inspiration should be accepted, while others, as in the United Lutheran Church, declare that the fact of inspiration must be accepted while the method may be a matter of opinion.' . . . Concerning the method none of us knows anything, and therefore concerning the method there can be no argument among us at all. . . . If there is so much agreement among us, what is all the argument about? All the argument is about the fact of inspiration, and there is none at all about the method. The difference among us is, that while we all say 'The Scriptures are inspired,' we do not all seem to mean the same thing. For some seem to wish to reserve to themselves the right to reject some of the Scriptures or some portion of some of the Scriptures as uninspired and unreliable. You can see that this denies the fact of inspiration as concerns those rejected portions, and has nothing to do with method. . . ." CONC. THEOL. MTHLY., 1939, p. 64 f., reprinted this and added the following: "The commissioners of the U. L. C. reported at Baltimore that 'the commissioners of the A. L. C. supported what is titled the 'Verbal Theory of Inspiration.' . . . The U. L. C. commissioners were 'unable to accept the statement of the Missouri Synod that the Scriptures are the infallible truth "also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters." . . . Then the U. L. C. convention declared: 'We believe that the whole body of the Scriptures is inspired by God.' . . . And that means that the distinction between the fact of inspiration and the 'theory' of inspiration (verbal, plenary inspiration, absolute infallibility of Scripture being a mere theory) is a clumsy form of sophistry. It deals with an 'inspiration' which is not real inspiration."

of this insidious procedure is that men will say with J. P. Smyth: "The Bible itself nowhere directs us what we are to believe about inspiration. Indeed, the Bible says very little of its inspiration at all beyond merely asserting its fact. It leaves us entirely to our own judgment as to its nature and extent, and as to what is involved in the fact of a book being inspired." (*Op. cit.*, p. 59.) And the *Lutheran Herald*, Oct. 13, 1942, commends Edwin Lewis (the man who finds "much unnecessary baggage" in the Bible) for taking this position: "He accepts the *fact*" (italics in original) "of the inspiration of the Bible without much theorizing." People are made to believe that, while they are rejecting great portions of the Bible, they are still treating it as an inspired book.

2. The moderns minimize the importance of Verbal Inspiration. They suggest to the Christians that they can get along very well without it. The liberals tell them that there is no need of any inspiration at all. They say with the editor of *The Christian Century*, March 30, 1938: "The writers of the Bible were even like ourselves — like E. S. Jones and Kagawa, if you wish. . . . I cannot imagine what added authority the Bible would have if it were conceived as having been dictated by God to a stenographer." And those who want to be known as conservatives speak in the same way of Verbal Inspiration. They say with E. H. Delk: "It is an unnecessary point of view of what is essential to Christianity." (*The Luth Ch. Quart.*, 1936, p. 426.) They offer us substitutes, which are just as good as Verbal Inspiration, or rather, much better. All is well with you, they say, if only the concepts be inspired; all you need is the "Word of God" or the *Schriftganze*; be satisfied to have the Gospel truths inspired, and do not bother about the trivial matter of *plenary* inspiration; after all, it is not quantity but quality which counts: "the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures is qualitative but not quantitative." Bound to prove that inspiration is relatively unimportant, the moderns point out that men were saved before an inspired Bible or an inspired New Testament existed. We heard R. F. Horton's statement "The New Testament is itself a record of the Christian faith being propagated at a wonderfully rapid rate without a New Testament at all. Peter had no writings to appeal to, except the Old Testament Scriptures; Paul preached his 'Gospel' without any reference to a written Gospel and never hinted that the further preaching of the faith should depend even on his own Epistles." (*Rev. and the Bible*, p. 218.) The inspired Scripture is of less importance than the *viva vox* of the Church — that is a commonplace of present-day theology. They will even say that it is of less importance, as the basis of faith, than "experience." In the words of Kahnis: "The true Christian bases his Christianity not on the inspiration and

authenticity of Scripture but on the living fact of his real communion with God through Christ."—The moderns are urging the Christians to forsake the sure Word, the inspired Word, and to set out on the chase after an *ignis fatuus*.

A favorite device of the anti-inspiration propaganda is to denounce the verbal-inspirationists as quibblers and hairsplitters, ranting over theological *minutiae* and disturbing the peace of the Church with their unseemly brawls about "minute doctrinal differences." Let one example suffice. The *Luth. Church Quart.*, 1934, p. 114, declares: "Scriptural theology will not quibble over such questions as whether the Bible is the Word of God or contains the Word of God." The moderns tell their people—and our people—that it is unprofitable to discuss the question whether the Bible is inspired throughout or only in parts and that the verbal-inspirationists, neglecting the important matters of the Church, are wasting their time over trivialities. It is a clever piece of propaganda. Much would be gained for the cause of the moderns if the Christian people could be made to rate the defenders of Verbal Inspiration as trifling quibblers and unreasonable hairsplitters.

And as disturbers of the peace. The charge is made that those who insist on Verbal Inspiration are keeping the Christian churches apart, are keeping the Lutheran synods apart, are keeping them apart by holding out for trivialities. That is an intolerable state of affairs, says H. L. Willett: "The controversies over the inspiration of the Scriptures, . . . creation or evolution, etc., . . . are ceasing to be counted worthy of causing divisions among the friends of Jesus." (See the *Chr. Century*, Jan. 27, 1937.) There are Lutherans who speak in the same strain. Recall the statement by *Folkebladet*, Nov. 23, 1938: "The theory of verbal inspiration has brought more confusion among Christians than perhaps anything else. . . . When a subjective theory is elevated to the status of an objective primary truth, then *virvar* surely will ensue in the Church." Recall the statement by the *Lutheran* which Dr. Dell quoted above: "The differences that keep American Lutherans from complete unification are more on the surface than real"—one of the differences being that some insist on Verbal Inspiration; and that is such a trifling matter. It is quibbling, we heard the *Luth. Church Quart.* say. Again, it is said: "The achievement of closer unity among Lutherans will require, for one essential, a higher view of Scripture than is represented by the theory of inspiration by dictation." (1935, p. 417.) The *Lutheran Companion*, March 30, 1939, complains that "Lutheran unity is made contingent upon the acceptance of definite individualistic interpretations of certain doctrines in which the Church has not made a final pro-

nouncement or has permitted considerable latitude of opinion." The *Lutheran Standard*, May 2, 1942, published the statement "that theological *minutiae* should never have become divisive in the Lutheran Church," and declared, March 22, 1941, that "to quibble over theories of inspiration is no less a disaster" and no less disgraceful than to quarrel over "the color of vestments." In the Washington Debate on Verbal Inspiration Dr. Snyder asked the representative of the A. L. C.: "Shall we quarrel over an adiaphoron while a sin-sick, needy world is hungering for the bread of life?" There are Lutherans who keep on saying: "Our petty divisions seem pitiful." "Our minor differences are not fundamental moral and religious differences." "When Lutherans forget their silly differences, then the Lutheran Church in America will grow as it never grew before." (See CONC. THEOL. MTHLY., VIII, p. 546.) — It is a skillful maneuver, a crafty argument. Who does not desire to see all Christians united? Who does not realize the great importance of it? The moderns play upon this sentiment and, stressing the importance of union, aim to create in the Christians the idea of the relative unimportance of Verbal Inspiration and then proceed to characterize it as unimportant in itself.

3. The moderns distort, vilify, and damn Verbal Inspiration. The object of the lying campaign is to keep the Christians from having anything to do with such a disreputable thing. It is, they say, a crude dogma, a clumsy distortion of what Scripture teaches on this point. Few intelligent Protestants still hold it. How can they in view of the hundreds of errors in the Bible? There are, they say, very few theologians, and assuredly no eminently learned ones, who hold the old doctrine of verbal inspiration. It represents the unintelligent view of the fundamentalists, the incredible fatuity of the literalists. It is only the metallic, inert, wooden, and narrow mind of the obscurantists, reactionaries, pre-Kantians, antediluvians that refuses to discard this dogma of the spiritually comatose seventeenth century, this worm-eaten dogmatism. This petrified inspiration dogma must be discarded with the rest of the world's old discarded mind lumber. Only an intellect childishly restricted will stand for it. No balanced mind will uphold it. It constitutes a mental aberration of the gravest type. Its avowal, one of them said, held to its last logic, would risk a trip to the insane asylum. There would be no purpose, said Dr. Kaftan, in discussing theological matters with people who believe in Verbal Inspiration.

Have nothing to do with it, the moderns exhort the Christian: for it is a new doctrine, *ein schlechthinniges Novum*, unheard of in the Church until the post-Reformation period. The Bible theologians invented it. The seventeenth-century theologians invented it. Luther got it from the Catholic theologians. The Lu-

therans took it over from the Reformed. To maintain it today, *waere ein repristinierender Rueckgriff auf Luther oder gar auf das Bibeldogma des Altluthertums* (M. Doerne). And, worst of all, it would be Fundamentalism.³³³⁾

Beware of Verbal Inspiration, say the moderns, for it is a hurtful dogma. It paralyzes the intellect. It restricts the mental growth of the human race. This cast-iron theory of the atomistic verbalists is a dogmatic fetter, a strait jacket, which handicaps the exegete. Worse than that, it is prolific of skepticism. The theory of literalism has been the death of any form of belief in Scripture; for there are the five hundred discrepancies and errors! *Seelenmordende Verbalinspiration!*

Beware of this evil thing! It is a wicked doctrine. It is not Christian. It is a heathen conception. It is a rabbinical superstition. Literal inerrancy is irreligious. It is immoral to hold that the doubtful ethics of the Bible were taught by God.—It cannot be upheld without the loss of intellectual integrity, of intellectual honesty, of the sense of truth.—It represents the Roman Catholic ideology. It is the product of rationalistic considerations.—It calls for, and creates, a slave mentality. This tyranny of an infallible book, this enslaving superstition, this bondage to old categories, must be broken, the prison house of verbal infallibility must be demolished.—This idolatrous acceptance of Bible authority, making the Bible a fetish, *Bibliolatry, sich aus der Schrift einen Offenbarungsgoetzen machen, Vergoetzung des einzelnen Worts*, is an idolatrous perversion of Christianity.—Verbal Inspiration is, in a word, a heresy. The foul spook must be cast out.

Will this lying propaganda have the desired effect? Is there *deep guile and great might* in it? The arguments advanced by the moderns are so puerile and fatuous that they should not beguile any Christian.³³⁴⁾ They do not appeal to the rational mind, and

333) Are we Fundamentalists? Our Western District declared that *true fundamentalism* means: 1) Unqualified acceptance of every word of the Bible as divine, infallible, and eternal truth. . . . (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1927, p. 247.) When the term of reproach "Fundamentalists" refers to this point, we are proud to be called that.—We are not in accord with the Fundamentalists on other important doctrines. The moderns who smear us as Fundamentalists surely know that.—It is a falsification of the historical facts to represent Fundamentalism in its fight for Verbal Inspiration as differing from Christianity.

334) R. F. Horton, for instance, proves that the written Word is not absolutely necessary with the fact that "the Christian faith was propagated [in the apostolic era] at a wonderfully rapid rate without a New Testament at all." The moderns make much of this argument. G. T. Ladd told us: "True Christian faith existed before the Bible." (*What Is the Bible*, p. 443.) *The Living Church*, Sept. 27, 1942: "The New Testament obviously cannot be the very foundation and basis of Christian truths which were taught to thousands by the early Church *before* the New Testament was produced." Here the Catholics come to the aid

they are repulsive to the Christian mind. But they must possess a powerful influence. Else they could not have captivated this great host of theologians. Their power lies in this, that they appeal to the wicked flesh. There is "deep guile and great might" in the tactics of the foe. His foolish and wicked arguments find instant acceptance with the evil heart of man. Our evil heart is prejudiced against God's Word. It delights in having God's Word besmirched.

of the moderns. A leaflet sent in the other day by one of our readers has this: "Why do you Catholics consider the Church and not the Bible as your rule of faith? . . . The truth is that Christianity preceded the New Testament. The Gospels and Epistles were written for the benefit of a Church which had been in existence already for many years." Will such an argument beguile any Christian? To be sure, the inspired word of the Apostles created the Christian faith. Nothing else can create faith. But we have their inspired word in the inspired New Testament *and nowhere else*. We need the New Testament absolutely. The Catholic substitute (the pronouncements of the Church) and the Protestant substitute (the *viva vox* of the Church) cannot serve. Neither the Catholic nor the Protestant teachers and preachers speak by inspiration of God.—The denunciation of the "Fundamentalist literalism" operates with a transparent sophistry. The fact that Fundamentalists—and others—are often guilty of *literalistic* interpretations of Scripture does not prove that the statements of Scripture need not be taken *literally*. (See CONC. THEOL. MTHLY., XII, p. 867, on the charge raised by C. L. Venable [U. L. C.] that "Missouri Lutherans" are guilty of "Bible literalism.")—Examine Kahnis' statement that "the true Christian bases his Christianity . . . on the living fact of his real communion with God through Christ." The *Proceedings of the Syn. Conference*, 1886, say on page 18: "What is 'the living fact of his real communion with God'? It means, if it means anything at all, 'his Christianity.' Das ist also das sauer erarbeitete Resultat, bei dem Kahnis ankommt, dass der wahre Christ sein Christentum stellt auf — sein Christentum."—Glance over the long list of absurdities examined in the preceding articles. There is the famous case of Luke dealing with a non-existent Lysanias—according to Bruno Bauer and D. F. Strauss. Errors have to be found in the Bible, if not by fair means, then by foul means. These same men, Strauss and Bauer, find a "contradiction" in the fact that the announcement made to Mary, Luke 1:26 ff., and that made to Joseph, Matt. 1:20, are not identical! How, then, can the Bible be verbally inspired? There is the famous case of Jonah's *dagah*—not a fish, but a skiff! And there is the crowning absurdity of the concept theory. "The extent of inspiration applies not to the words but to the sense." (G. L. Raymond.) The moderns are stupidly asking us to perform an intellectual impossibility. You cannot have the sense without the words. This favorite theory of the moderns is nonsense. And can you express this idea, this concept, in any other way than by using the word "nonsense"? Verily, "there is nothing too absurd to have been stated or imagined on this question" (McIntosh).—The moderns are lacking in spiritual insight, too. Here they have been making concessions to the unbelievers, "shortened the lines of defense," but, as Dr. Nutter pointed out in the *Living Church*, "the anticipated stampede of the intelligentsia into the Church, which was to follow the abandonment of miracle, has not taken place." The moderns do not know how to deal with unbelievers. And what advice are they giving the believer? They ask him to rely on his "Christian consciousness" for finding and establishing the truth. But we know, says Spurgeon, "that every man who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client." What the moderns offer us on Inspiration is devoid of common sense and of Christian sense.

Our proud flesh refuses to submit to Scripture, as Verbal Inspiration requires it to do, and hails the opportunity to sit in judgment on Scripture, as the moderns ask it to do. It is thus that the foolish objections against Verbal Inspiration carry great weight. And the great danger of our losing the battle, of our giving up Verbal Inspiration, lies in this, that our own flesh is the ally of the enemy. When Satan rouses up the pride and wickedness of our flesh, we have to contend with "deep guile and great might," against superhuman forces. We cannot win the battle unless we use the almighty resources which are at hand.

But the victory will be ours if, as we shall consider in the fourth place, we employ against the tactics of the foe *the divine strategy: bring the almighty Word into action.*

That was the strategy St. Paul employed. He knew that divine power inheres in the Word, 1 Thess. 2:13; he did not enlist human wisdom to fight its battle, but permitted the simple Word to demonstrate its power, 1 Cor. 2:4, 5. That was Luther's strategy. "Durch das Wort ist die Welt ueberwunden, ist die Kirche erhalten worden; sie wird auch durch das Wort wiederhergestellt werden." (XV:2506.) All that Luther did was to put God's almighty Word into action. "God's Word has been my sole study and concern, the sole subject of my preaching and writing. Other than this I have done nothing in the matter. This same Word has, while I slept or made merry, accomplished this great thing." (XX:21.) The only method Luther employed to prove the truth of any Scripture doctrine was to let Scripture speak for itself. "He loved the Sacred Book! He fought by its help. It was his battle-ax and his weapon of war." (Spurgeon.)

How shall we prove the truth of Verbal Inspiration? Being a teaching of Scripture, it carries within itself divine power. It proves itself. All that we need to do is to proclaim: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and let this Word do its work. It has the divine power to convince men of its truth and produce their joyful acceptance of it. Learn to apply this strategy, as Luther learned to do it. The *Princeton Theol. Review*, Vol. 15, pp. 513 and 555, thus describes Luther's strategy: "For Luther Scripture thus came to rest for its authority . . . on its own self-evidencing power. . . . The indefeasible certitude of the Christian as to the divinity of the Word comes from God Himself." Quoting Luther (Erl. Ed., 28: 298; St. L., XX:74) to the effect that the Christian must be, and can be, "unshakably certain that it is God's Word, though all the world should fight against it," the *Review* points out: "Luther saw with hawklike clearness the main point in the solution of the problem of authority in the Christian religion: *the inspired Scriptures carry themselves*; they do not depend for

their power on the testimony of the Church or any human authority, but only on the witnesss of the Holy Spirit who creates in the believing heart the conviction of their divine origin and contents. . . ."

We are asked to surrender (or modify) the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration. Our unbelieving, proud flesh asks it. We are sorely tempted to do it. But in this fearful conflict, which tries the soul and rends the heart, we shall gain the strength to overcome our flesh from this very doctrine itself. It speaks with divine power to our troubled soul. Let that power work in you! When we are tempted to delete 1 Tim. 5:23 and 2 Tim. 4:13, the Holy Spirit speaks out in our hearts: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God!" When we are invited to strike out the account of Creation, of Jonah and the fish, and of the thousand other miracles, there comes the cry from heaven: "The Scripture cannot be broken!" When Satan asks us to split up John 3:16 and 1 John 2:2 into thoughts of God and words of men, the word: "which things we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," reverberate in our hearts in "demonstration of the Spirit and of power." Verbal Inspiration teaches that the words of Scripture are God's Words, and that teaching fills us with such holy awe of the majesty of Scripture that we trample the sacrilegious mutterings of our flesh underfoot as the evil spawn of Satan. Let this divine teaching do its work, and you will say: "God's Word counts for more than all angels and saints and creatures" (Luther, XVIII:1322); you will say: This teaching of Scripture — Verbal Inspiration — has more weight than all the teachings of a pseudo-science and a pseudo-theology.

What shall we do when our proud flesh keeps on angrily protesting against Verbal Inspiration? Holy Scripture fights our battles for us in this way, too, that in denouncing this awful wickedness it threatens those who persist in it with a terrible fate. Ponder Matt. 11:25 and 1 Pet. 2:6-8! Woe unto him against whom God finally pronounces the dread judgment of obduracy, in consequence of which these things are now *hidden* from him, he is cut off from understanding Scripture; that which is a savor of life unto life has become a savor of death unto death unto him. If a man *will* stumble at God's Word, it shall be to him a stumbling block and a rock of offense. Hear again how Luther enforces this warning of Scripture: "I beg and faithfully warn every pious Christian not to take offense at the simple language and ordinary stories which he frequently finds here. . . . For this is the Scripture which makes fools of the wise and prudent and is open only to babes and fools, as Christ says Matt. 11:25." (XIV:3.) Hear again how Pieper enforces it: "One who criticizes Scripture — which, as God's

Word, will not be criticized but believed — comes under the fearful judgment of God described Matt. 11: 25." (Op. cit., I, p. 280.) And hear how J. W. Haley presents this Scripture truth: "Those who are disposed to cavil find opportunities for caviling. *The disposition does not miss the occasion.* . . . 'There is light enough for those whose main wish is to see; and darkness enough for those of an opposite disposition.' (Pascal.) . . . Those persons who cherish a caviling spirit, who are bent upon misapprehending the truth and urging captious and frivolous objections find in the sacred volume difficulties and disagreements which would seem to have been designed as stumbling stones for those 'which stumble at the Word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed' (1 Pet. 2:8). Upon the willful votaries of error God sends 'strong delusions, that they should believe a lie' (2 Thess. 2:11), that they might work out their own condemnation and ruin. 'If we disparage Scripture and treat it "as any other book," then Almighty God, who is the Author of Scripture, will punish us by our own devices. . . . Our presumption and our irreverence will be instruments of our punishment.' . . . When the difficulties of Scripture are approached with a docile and reverent mind, they may tend to our establishment in the faith; but when they are dealt with in a querulous and disingenuous manner, they may become judicial agencies in linking to caviling skepticism its appropriate penalty — even to the loss of the soul." (Op. cit., p. 39 f.) Haley addresses this warning to skepticism. But it applies — Scripture applies it — also to those who in more subtle ways deny the inspiration of Scripture and deride the truth that the words of Scripture are the very words of God. This warning of Holy Scripture is the power of God. It fills our hearts with fear and dismay over the frightful catastrophe which the machinations of Satan and the wickedness of our flesh are preparing for us. And the better we know our danger, and the more earnestly we call to God for His gracious help, the better prepared we are for receiving the full influence of the power of the teachings of Scripture.

And how shall we win others for the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration? Scripture wins its own battles. All that is required of us is to put the power of the Word into action — simply to proclaim the teaching of Scripture. That was Luther's strategy. When dealing with men who deny or doubt "that what Christ and the apostles spoke and wrote is the Word of God, . . . say only this: I shall give you sufficient ground from Scripture; if you believe, well; if not, just go your way" (IX:1238). As long as men will listen to us, we give them ground from Scripture. That has the power to convince them. And it is the only thing that can win them. They may for a time struggle against this doctrine of

Verbal Inspiration as utter foolishness, but, as Dr. Walther says: "our only help lies in this, that the divine foolishness, the old unadulterated Gospel, be preached to it" (the present apostate world). (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1875, p. 41.) So we say: The only way to gain the victory in this battle is to preach the divine foolishness, the old unadulterated doctrine of Verbal Inspiration. That preaching, that testimony carries divine power.

When a man accepts Verbal Inspiration, a miracle is being wrought. Let us not attempt to argue men into accepting it. Our words of human wisdom cannot perform miracles. It takes almighty power to subdue the ratiocinations of the flesh. And this almighty power lies in the teaching of Scripture on Inspiration. Let us apply the power! — We can add nothing to it by our reasoning powers. But this great and glorious thing God permits us to do: we can proclaim His truth.

How many will be won through our testimony? That is not for us to say. That lies in the hands of the gracious Lord. But those that will be won will be won through the power of the Word, and we thank God for every opportunity given us to present the conquering doctrine of verbal inspiration to men.

We are fighting to win men for Verbal Inspiration, and we are fighting to preserve Verbal Inspiration for the Church. Are we fighting for a lost cause? We hear them shouting that our cause is doomed. They are getting ready to give Verbal Inspiration the *coup de grace*. But we know that it will never perish from the earth. The Bible has withstood all the assaults of the foe. It is an impregnable rock.³³⁵⁾ And so has Verbal Inspiration stood, an impregnable rock, against all the assaults of the enemy, from the first century down to the present day. The clamor of Paine and Strauss, the clamor of the liberal and conservative moderns, could not silence its almighty voice. Many Christians, theologians and laymen, are broadcasting this powerful voice. In various church bodies this doctrine is being proclaimed with apostolic clarity and

335) J. R. Stratton, in his book *The Battle over the Bible*, says on page 16: "Intellectual pride has often rejected it (the Bible) because of the vanity of man's mind; and infidelity has battled against it with a relentlessness worthy of a better cause and a malignity unmatched elsewhere in the dark realm of prejudice, hatred, and spite. What has the result been? Always victory for the noble old Book! It has successfully resisted the sophistries of Hume, the misguided eloquence of Gibbon, the rationalism of Rousseau, the ignorant blasphemies of Thomas Paine, the satirical mockery of Voltaire, the idle quibbling of Strauss, the shallow witticism of Renan, the cheap buffoonery of Bob Ingersoll, the audacious assaults of the Communists of France, and the insidious duplicity of the rationalistic theologians of Prussianized Germany. As with Moses' bush, the Bible has burned, but it has not been consumed. Phoenixlike, it has risen from its ashes to new heights of usefulness and power."

firmness. Will it endure unto the end? It will never perish. It will have its Thermopylaes, but it will never be utterly defeated. It will always remain to be the Christians' stay and comfort. Even if a time should come that it were no longer *publica doctrina* in any church body, it would be exercising its divine power secretly. If at some future time all the theologians of the world should meet in solemn conclave and promulgate the decree: *Si quis dixerit, Scripturam Sacram esse ipsum Verbum Dei, anathema sit*, the Christians would spurn that decree. In practice they would cling to, and apply, Verbal Inspiration. It is possible that a Christian theologian might *in disputationibus* argue against Verbal Inspiration but that in the hour of stress and trial he will, by the grace of God, cling to John 3:16 as the verbally inspired, absolutely true and certain Word of God. All Christians will in the future as well as now believe, in their hearts, in Verbal Inspiration.

We do not know whether such a conclave will ever be held. We doubt it. But let that be as it may. We are concerned with the present. Verbal Inspiration is, thank God, the *publica doctrina* in large areas. And our sacred duty is to keep faithful watch and ward over it. And while the moderns are importuning us to join them in anathematizing it, we are glad of the opportunity God has given faithful witnesses to make its loud voice resound throughout the earth and bring assurance and comfort to many souls who, but for this testimony, would remain in uncertainty and doubt and might possibly despair.

We shall certainly keep up the fight for Verbal Inspiration. That entails, as any other war, hardship and suffering. But the strength to bear that is supplied by the Word. There is the disturbing fact that the great majority of present-day theologians is against us. Those that fight for Verbal Inspiration are but few in number.³³⁶⁾ In this situation our flesh raises the disturbing question: If Verbal Inspiration be a doctrine of Holy Scripture, why would so many theologians refuse to accept it? May it not be an open question? Again, our flesh takes the defeatist attitude: What can your small number hope to accomplish against this vast host? And what have you to offer to offset the great learning and prestige on their side? — Verbal Inspiration will give us the

336) "It is, sad to say, true what Nitzsch-Stephan says of the 'present situation': 'In our day the orthodox doctrine of inspiration has hardly any significance in dogmatics. It is, true enough, being still upheld by a few, e. g., Koelling and Noesgen, with some modifications. . . . The rest of the theologians, including the conservatives, reject the old doctrine.' Zoekler mentions as lonely defenders of the old doctrine: Kohlbruegge, Gaussen, Kuyper, and 'among the Lutherans particularly Walther in St. Louis and with him the Missouri Synod.' Also most of the present-day Reformed theologians have given up the inspiration of Scripture." (Pieper, *op. cit.*, p. 327.)

strength to overcome these misgivings, doubts, and temptations. What Scripture says on Verbal Inspiration gives us divine assurance, and we shall maintain it though all the world should protest its truth. And as to those great resources which the foe can command, there are greater resources at our disposal. We have the almighty truth of Verbal Inspiration on our side. We can do miracles. "Das ist ein Wunder ueber alle Wunder," says Luther, "dass ein solch gering Wort, das kein Ansehen hat vor der Welt, soll so viel Leute gewinnen." (XII:1568.) The Scripture truth that the Bible is verbally inspired is stronger than all the wisdom of the world and the might of the great number. The power of God's truth is fighting for us. This talk about the great majority being against us shall not disturb us. "I believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God. . . . I can trust God, though I shall have to stand alone before the world in declaring Him to be true." (Dr. H. A. Kelly.) "Ob mir schon die ganze Welt anhinge und wiederum abfiele, das ist mir eben gleich, und denke: Ist sie mir doch zuvor auch nicht angehangen, da ich allein war." (Luther, XIX:422.)

We need strength to bear the ridicule and the reproaches heaped upon us in this cause. No one can today uphold Verbal Inspiration without being made the butt of universal ridicule. Obscurantists! Backward theologians! Fundamentalists! Now, we can easily bear that; but it cuts deeper when we are reproached — sometimes by well-meaning men — with sinning against God and men by taking such an uncompromising stand. When we refuse to be satisfied with the vague inspiration commonly taught and stand out for every jot and tittle of Verbal Inspiration, they say that that is due to sinful pride and carnal prejudice and wicked stubbornness. We could bear that, too; but then our own flesh raises the same clamor. Is Verbal Inspiration really so important? — In this fierce trial we fall back on our old strategy. We examine again all that Scripture says on Verbal Inspiration. Convinced of the truth of it, we know we would be sinning against God if we suppressed it. Convinced of its necessity, we know that we would be sinning against our fellow men if we yielded any part of it. And thus the Lord fulfills His Word "Thou, therefore, gird up thy loins, and arise and speak unto them all that I command thee. . . . For, behold, I have made thee this day . . . an iron pillar and brazen walls against the whole land. . . . They shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee" (Jer. 1:17 ff.).

Will we stand firm when we are asked to sacrifice Verbal Inspiration in the interest of church union? Particularly at this point the foe displays "deep guile and great might." They say,

at times, that the verbal-inspirationists lose nothing under this unionistic arrangement since they will be permitted to keep on teaching their peculiar doctrine to their heart's content; and our flesh is very willing to be beguiled by such suggestions. Or they tell us that we have no right to make Verbal Inspiration divisive of church fellowship since "the Scriptures declare the fact of inspiration but make no explanation concerning the issues involved in the 'theories' of *form and degree*, which furnish the material for present-day controversies on the subject" (*The Luth. World Almanac*). Or: let the Scripture teaching be what it may, church union is of such supreme importance that all questions of inspiration are trivial in comparison. And our flesh fully agrees. We find it hard to stand firm. And when at this point the reproaches assume particular virulence—sinful pride, carnal prejudice, wicked stubbornness—and our own flesh begins to rage and rave, we begin to waver. In this crisis the Word of God comes to our aid. Let a man once be convinced of the truth and supreme importance of Verbal Inspiration, and he will be able to resist all temptations to compromise it. He will not only refuse to yield up one jot or tittle of it but will also refuse to give the hand of fellowship to those who deny all or any part of Verbal Inspiration; for that would make the denial of it a matter of little importance. Knowing that the Christians need the precious doctrine of verbal inspiration, he will not jeopardize their spiritual welfare by asking them to receive as their spiritual advisers those who deny either the truth or the importance of it. The truth of God's Word and the interest of his fellow Christians weigh so much for him that the reproach and shame he suffers in this cause weigh very little.

He maintains friendly relations with all who are searching for the truth, searching for it in God's Word, but he cannot make common cause with men who set out to ravage and despoil God's Word. He absolutely refuses to bid them Godspeed.

Stubbornness? May we be of those to whom the Lord says: "Behold, I have made Thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their forehead. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead; fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks," Ezek. 3:8, 9.³³⁷

337) J. A. Dell: "We desire unity among Lutherans but not unity at the expense of truth. If it comes to a choice between these two: (1) outward unity, with a hushing up and smoothing over of deep-going differences in our views regarding the reliability of the Bible, and (2) outward disunity, even controversy, with the result that this doctrine of inspiration is thrust into the foreground and thought about and debated—if it comes to a choice between these two, I say, the second alternative is much to be preferred. For the former can never lead

Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints! That is a call to arms which cannot be disregarded. We would not disregard it. Our flesh, indeed, would have us evade the service, and we need to be reminded, by the Law, of the punishment meted out to the traitor. But as far as we are spiritual, we enter the battle for Verbal Inspiration willingly and gladly. For we love this glorious doctrine. We owe so much to it. We owe to it the greatest blessing of Christianity: the assurance of God's grace. But for Verbal Inspiration the Gospel promises could not yield assurance and comfort. We fight for it not merely because it is one of the things which Christ has commanded us and must be observed but because it is tied up with the truth and reliability of the Gospel. We love this precious teaching.³³⁸ It has comforted

to a real unity, but the latter may." (*Journal of the Am. Luth. Conf.*, March, 1938.) Th. Graebner, *The Problem of Lutheran Union*: "The United Lutheran Church is not at all minded to make doctrine an issue in an attempt at Lutheran union. . . . By denying the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures it removes on its part the very foundation for it (doctrinal purity)" (J. H. C. Fritz, page VII). "With the desire for union expressed in the resolutions (of the U. L. C. adopted at Savannah) we find ourselves in hearty agreement. . . . But it would be a fatal mistake to make a public declaration of unity if the reality of it is absent. . . . In the last decades there has arisen a new issue, indicated by the words 'higher criticism' and 'inspiration of the Bible,' on which, it seems, the various Lutheran bodies are not occupying common ground. Any attempt to bring about agreement between the synods will have to take this issue into consideration." (Wm. Arndt, p. 40.) —A church union between those who teach and those who deny, or tolerate the denial of, Verbal Inspiration will produce *virvar* with a vengeance. On Bible Sunday the first guest preacher will declare: "Is not the inspiration of Scripture too high and holy a reality to be defined in terms of stenography? . . . That avowal [of Verbal Inspiration], held to its last logic, would risk a trip to the insane asylum." And the second guest preacher will declare: "Beware, beware, I say, of this 'divine-human Scripture.' It is a devil's mask." Dr. Pieper thus describes the *virvar*: "In derselben Kirchengemeinschaft, so dass die Bekenner und die Bestreiter der goettlichen Autoritaet der Schrift eintraechtig und bruederlich beieinander wohnen, als ob nichts zwischen ihnen stuende? Das ist ein Unding, wiewohl es heutzutage sehr allgemein — auch in der amerikanisch-lutherischen Kirche — praktiziert wird." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1928, p. 370.)

338) "How thankful I am that in this evil world, where men are groping blindly and the blind are leading the blind, it is our privilege to have an infallible rule of faith and practice, even the Word of God! We cannot safely trust our own reason, for we do not know enough; nor our feelings, for they are unstable and biased by sin; nor science, because it cannot tell us what we most want to know; nor the teachings of the Church, for the Church is not infallible. But we can trust the Word of God, for it is God-given; it has been transmitted to us faithfully and it is being continually proved true. Therefore our duty is to lay aside all prejudices concerning it, to study it, to receive the Christ revealed therein, and to obey Him in all things." (J. H. McComb, *God's Purpose in This Age*, p. 73.) "The Bible abides as the faithful witness — the most faithful witness we have — concerning the character of God, the need of man, and the Gospel which alone can meet that need." (Dr. P. W. Evans, in the *Watchman-Examiner*, Aug. 14, 1941.)

us and been our stay in the day of temptation and in the hour of affliction, and we want the future generations to be blessed by it. It is a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks, but we have found it to be the power and wisdom of God and the foundation of our trust in the grace of God. "By pagan pride rejected, spurned," the Word, given by verbal inspiration, is our greatest treasure. We thank God that He has permitted us to enlist in its service.

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken.' That is and must remain our battle cry. That is the device emblazoned on our banner. If ever our Synod should no longer hold this banner aloft, her fall would not be imminent but would already have set in, and she would be fit only to be cast away as insipid salt that no longer serves but only deserves to be trodden under foot." (Walther.) Taking up the battle cry Γέγονται, as the Captain of our salvation sounded it against Satan, let us earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints and preserve unto the Church the precious doctrine of verbal inspiration. (See *Walther and the Church*, p. 24.)

TH. ENGELDER

Outlines on Old Testament Texts (Synodical Conference)

Third Sunday in Advent

Isaiah 61:1-6

In this Advent season we like to dwell on the prophecies of the Old Testament in which the coming of the Redeemer is foretold. The saints of the Old Covenant lived in a period of waiting; their thoughts were directed to the future. In a different, but real, sense we in this season of the year are in an attitude of waiting, our thoughts occupy themselves with the coming Christmas festival when the birth of the Savior will be observed. It is quite natural that the old prophecies which thrilled the waiting hearts of the saints of the Old Covenant have a special appeal for us these days.

The contents of the beautiful prophecy before us today can well be summarized in the expression found here:

Beauty for Ashes

I

We find here statements referring to the *misery in which men are by nature*.

The speaker of the text is the Messiah Himself. That is

clearly proved through Luke 4:18, where Jesus quotes the first part of the text with respect to Himself.

He points to the misery which is the natural condition of men before the Messiah has done His work for them. His natural lot is symbolized by ashes, ashes on the head, the sign of grief and mourning.

Other terms to be noted are: brokenhearted, captives, bound in prison, the spirit of heaviness. These are figurative expressions showing what a pitiful condition we are in without the work of Christ.

Man, created by God in beautiful garments of righteousness, cast these garments aside; being free, he made himself a prisoner of sin.

This is still the status of all unconverted people. See them serve unrighteousness. Observe the misery into which their wrongdoing leads them: evil conscience, suffering in body and soul, and finally everlasting death.

Do we make the application and realize the distress which is ours by nature?

2

The text furthermore speaks of the *joy and happiness which the Messiah has prepared for all*. The promised Helper has come and has brought beauty for ashes. He has taken away the ugliness of unrighteousness. He has removed the barrier separating God and man, the guilt of sin, paying the penalty for us.

This is described in beautiful figurative language. The wounded are bound up, the captives set free, the mourning are comforted, praise takes the place of the spirit of heaviness, the old wastes are built up, the desolate cities are repaired; the meaning is a full ransom is paid for sinners.

This is what the Messiah has been appointed to do for all men through His great sacrifice. All people are sinners and need such help. Alas! many will not be aided; they stubbornly and persistently refuse the Lord's help. But those that accept the Messiah as their own Redeemer will be called "priests of the Lord" (v. 6). Rich treasures will be theirs, treasures like those of the victors spoken of in the second part of v. 6. They have beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

This all points to the spiritual riches which the children of God possess: righteousness, forgiveness, peace, joy, a place in heaven.

Are these our riches? Do we accept the good tidings preached by the Messiah and the gifts He presents? God grant it.

W. ARNDT

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Hag. 2:6-9

Christmas is coming! Rejoice! Can we? Round about us we see war and bloodshed and heartache, falling like a blight upon the Christians' joy and dampening their enthusiasm for church work. In our text the Lord of hosts tells us

Why Can We Joyfully Do the Lord's Work in Troubled Times?

Because

1. *The Lord of hosts is the Ruler of the universe*
2. *The Lord of hosts makes His Church a glorious one*
3. *The Lord of hosts provides the means necessary for the building of His Church*

1

On the basis of Ezra 3:1 to 5:2; Hag. 1:1 to 2:5, describe briefly the historical setting of our text: Israel's disappointment at difficulties and opposition confronting them, their waning zeal, placing their own comfort above the concern for God's kingdom. God had rebuked them, 1:3-11; they had repented, and now the Lord promises, 1:13; 2:4, 5. As the first reason for joyful resumption of their work He mentions the fact that their God is the Ruler of the universe. They were a weak nation, Deut. 7:7; yet their God was not a weak God but the Lord of hosts. *I will shake all nations*; cp. v. 22, 23; Is. 37:21-29, 33-36; 43:14-16; 44:6, 7, 26-28.

Our God is still the Lord of all the earth, Josh. 3:11; Zech. 6:5. In particular the Christ child is He of whom Scripture prophesied: Ps. 8:7; Is. 9:6. Cp. Matt. 11:27a; 28:18; Eph. 1:21; Phil. 2:9-11. Our Savior by His will and word shapes the history and destiny of all nations. Just because He is given to be the Head over all things to the Church, Eph. 1:22, He will rule all things for the welfare of the Church at large and its individual members, so that His kingdom of peace will endure and grow forever. What a comfort for us Christians to know that in spite of war and tumult, confusion and disorder, Jesus, our Savior, rules for our welfare the whole world!

2

A. V. 9b. Though the world has been torn by wars at all times, though war and bloodshed will continue to the end of times, one warfare of infinitely graver import, that warfare in which God was opposed to mankind, is at an end, has been ended 1900 years ago, when God Himself established peace through the Babe of Bethlehem, the Prince of Peace, Is. 9:6, who fulfilled Is. 50:6; 53:2-12. Cp. Col. 1:19-22; 2:13, 14.

B. Through this Gospel of peace God will fill His house, the

Church symbolized by the Temple, with glory, v. 7, far exceeding the former glory, v. 9 a, both extensively and intensively. Extensively: compare the 50,000 inhabitants of Judea with the 125,000 members of our Northern Illinois District, the more than one million members of our Synod, the number of Lutherans, of Christians, in the world. Compare the little country of Judea with the territory covered by the Church of the New Testament. While the Old Testament Church was restricted to the commonwealth of Israel, in the New Testament "the desire" — those desired, loved, chosen, by God — "of all nations shall come," an innumerable multitude, Gen. 15: 5; Is. 49: 18-23; 60: 1-16; Rev. 14: 6; 7: 9, 10.

C. The upheavals in the world must serve God in building His kingdom. Those century-long wars from which finally Rome emerged as the ruler of the world, and the Greek language as the universal language, not only caused innumerable Gentiles to come into contact with the Jews and to learn of their Messianic hope, but at the same time smoothed the way for the preaching and rapid spreading of the Gospel in all the world.

In a similar manner God caused Gutenberg to invent the art of printing just before the Reformation, moved the founders of our United States to write religious liberty into our Constitution, gave us the radio as a means of spreading the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. Even this present world war must serve the spreading of the Gospel. Through the sending of Christian soldiers to all parts of the earth the Gospel is brought to many that would not have heard it because of the sluggishness of so many Christians.

What comfort to know that even in the time of war and disorder God is building His kingdom on earth and bringing the Gospel of salvation to many who have not yet heard it.

3

One more question arises: Will not the war deprive us of our means to carry on the work of the Church? The Lord of hosts answers: v. 8. The God of that insignificant Jewish nation was infinitely rich, Ps. 24: 1; 50: 10-12. He was able to find ways and means even in times of financial difficulties to give to His people the necessary means to carry on His work, Ex. 12: 35; Ps. 105: 37. A circumstance that might have seemed to effectually stop further building served, by God's omnipotent direction, to move the powerful King Darius to support the erection and beautifying of the Temple in a truly regal manner, Ezra 5: 3 to 6: 12. This same God to this day is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, Eph. 3: 20, and can give to Christians even in hard times the wherewithal to build His kingdom.

This rich God makes us willing to offer our gold and silver to Him. Cp. Ex. 36:3-7; Ezra 2:69; 6:14-17; 2 Cor. 9:8-15. The poverty of our fathers did not prevent them from building God's kingdom. We still have silver and gold, God's gift to us. Let us use it in His service and trust Him to provide also in future sufficient means for our needs and the needs of His Kingdom of Grace, until He comes to take us to His Kingdom of Glory. Away with sorrow and fears! Let Christmas joy fill our hearts, for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts. Zech. 2:4.

TH. LAETSCH

Christmas

Isaiah 9:2-7

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men," Luke 2:14. So on that first Christmas night sang the heavenly host praising God. "On earth peace!" But the world is not at peace, it is at war! What, then, is that peace of which the angels sang? It is the peace which the Savior brought to sinners at war against God. Because multitudes of men despise this peace, they are still at war against God and also among themselves. They are trying to free themselves from the tyranny of man—for that purpose, we are told, the world war is being fought—but they are enslaved by a more powerful tyrant, by Satan himself, they are the slaves of Satan and of sin. We who by faith in Him are the Savior's people and are free from the tyranny of Satan and sin enjoy the glorious freedom and peace which Christ procured for the world. Let us anew be thankful and rejoice on this Christmas Day, and let us be encouraged to spread the Gospel of the great Liberator from sin, Satan, death, and hell. The Christmas message is the good news which we and the world so much need today.

Christ, Born at Bethlehem, the World's Great Liberator
Isaiah's prophecy speaks

1. *Of His wonderful Person*
2. *Of His great work of liberation*
3. *Of His glorious kingdom*

1

To a world dead in trespasses and sins and subject to eternal damnation God has sent the Liberator, the God-Man, Jesus Christ. That this great Liberator spoken of in the text is Jesus Christ, is evident from the text itself; but also from Matt. 4:12-16.

a. "Unto us a Child is born," v. 6. Christ, born at Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary, *true Man*, Luke 24:39.

b. "Unto us a Son is given," v. 6. Matt. 1:23, Emmanuel, God with us; the Deliverer, or Liberator, is *true God*, Luke 1:35; *given*,

that is, the eternal Son was sent by the Father; God provided the Redeemer. Being the God-Man, His Name is "Wonderful," v. 6. Hymn No. 85: 2, 3.

Ahaz despised God's help and called upon the King of Assur, Tiglath-pileser, who deported the inhabitants of Zebulun and Naphtali into exile, v. 1. Thus God's judgment upon Israel was begun. But this same region shall be among the first in New Testament times to receive the Messiah's blessings, v. 2; Matt. 4:12-16. There, in the Galilee of the Gentiles, Jesus first exercised His ministry; from that region came most of His Apostles.

a. *The darkness of sin and death* that had come upon the world is spoken of in v. 2. By the fall of man sin came into the world. That brought to man, *enslaved in sin*, misery and death, eternal death ("land of the shadow of death," v. 2), Rom. 5:12. — All the misery in the war-torn world today is the result of man's sin, of *our sin*. God's judgment is upon the world calling us and the sinful world to repentance, for God does not delight in the death of the sinner, Ps. 81:8-16; Ezek. 18:31, 32. And, thank God, there is deliverance from sin, for

b. God Himself has sent us *the world's Liberator* from sin, Satan, death, hell. The "great Light," v. 2, to dispel the darkness of sin has appeared. While the joy was not increased when the people multiplied and their sins multiplied, v. 3, now they can rejoice in their Savior from sin, even as there is rejoicing when the harvest is gathered in or when the victor divides his spoil, v. 3, for the yoke of the burden of sin, etc., has been broken, vv. 4, 5. This was done "as in the day of Midian," v. 4. As Gideon conquered the Midianites, not by the strength of men, but by the power of God, so man was delivered from sin and death not by his own strength, but through the "Child," the "Son," through the Savior sent by God, John 3:16. He alone could overcome for us sin, death, and hell (vicarious atonement).

The names given to the great Deliverer speak of His work of liberation or redemption: *Counselor*. Though man was in dire straits because of his sin and knew not the way out, He knew, He Himself became the Way, John 14:6.—*The Mighty God*, mighty to overpower all His and our enemies, Heb. 2:14.—*The Everlasting Father*, John 10:30; 14:9. With a fatherly love He will reign over and bless His people forever.—*The Prince of Peace*. He brought peace to man's evil conscience, for He established peace between God and man, Luke 2:14; Eph. 2:14-19; Rom. 5:1; 10:15.

Having such a Savior, we should repent of our sins and cheerfully and thankfully by faith, Eph. 2:8, accept Him and be members of His glorious kingdom of peace.

a. *The Prince of Peace*, who is Ruler over all things ("the government shall be upon His shoulder," v. 6), but who is especially the Savior of men, established His kingdom of peace, Rom. 14:17, His Church, of which He is the Head. Though men have deserved to be judged, condemned on account of their sins, the justice of God has been satisfied by the redemption wrought by His Son, so that the believer now is received into Christ's kingdom of peace, v. 7.

b. Of the *increase of this Kingdom* "there shall be no end," it shall take in all who through the Gospel believe in Christ, everywhere and at all times, v. 7; 1 Tim. 2:4.

c. It is an *eternal Kingdom*, Matt. 16:18.

"The *zeal of the Lord*," His love for sinful mankind, will perform this, so that it shall be so now and to all eternity.

The Christmas message of the world's great Liberator should anew be received by us in true repentance and faith, Mark 1:14, 15, fill our hearts with "joy unspeakable," 1 Pet. 1:8, persuade us "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," Titus 2:11, 12, and compel us to preach the Gospel of peace, Rom. 10:15, to a world so much in need of it. Hymn No. 79.

Note: Hymn No. 106 (new hymnal) puts this text into verse. It may be sung after the sermon has been preached.

J. H. C. FRITZ

Second Christmas Day

Zech. 2:10-13

Is this a Christmas text? It is. The speaker is none other than Jesus Christ, whose birthday we are celebrating. No other person may call himself the Messenger of the Lord, v. 11, and yet identify himself with Jehovah, v. 10. Cp. Jesus' assertions: John 8:25-29, 42; 10:30; 14:9. This Jesus tells us of His coming into the world for a threefold purpose, each increasing our Christmas joy.

Let us Sing and Rejoice in This Happy Christmastide!

1. *In Christ Jesus the Lord has come to dwell in our midst*
2. *He still comes to build His Church*
3. *He shall come again in glory*

Already in the Old Testament God dwelt in the midst of His people, Ex. 13:21; 25:8, 22; Ps. 9:11; 135:21. Through Zechariah He foretells a future coming and dwelling in the midst of Israel.

The fulfillment is found Luke 1:28-35, 68, 79; 2:1-14; John 1:14. The Lord of Hosts has come as a little child, Is. 9:6, in order to be our righteousness, Jer. 23:6; Matt. 1:21; Luke 2:21; John 1:12, 16-18; 2 Cor. 8:9; Gal. 4:4, 5.

This prophecy and its fulfillment bids you rejoice, for your Savior has come. A Savior, willing to save, able to save to the uttermost, *your* Savior; He *has* come. Go to the manger and sing and rejoice.

2

V. 11 a. In the Old Testament, Israel was God's chosen people. Ex. 19:5, 6; Amos 3:2. In the New Testament God's people comprises the believers of all nations, Is. 2:2, 3; 49:6, 18-23; 60:1 f. "That day" is the day of Jesus and the preaching of His Gospel whereby those afar off shall be gathered to the Lord and together with believing Israel form one people. Eph. 2:11-22; Col. 1:21, 22.

V. 12. The Church of the New Testament, like towns without walls, Zech. 2:4, extends far beyond Jerusalem, Judah, Palestine. Wherever there are confessors of the Babe of Bethlehem, there is indeed "the Holy Land"; the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, chosen of God. To the believing exiles in distant Babylon was given the promise, Ezek. 11:15, 16. So Christ says Matt. 18:20. Cp. Is. 2:4-6; 1 Cor. 1:1, 2; 2 Cor. 6:16. Sing and rejoice! This Gospel has been preached to you. You have been added to the Church because the Child in the manger has by the Gospel drawn you to Himself.

V. 11 b. When we consider the conversion of multitudes of heathen, the remarkable change wrought in individuals and nations by the preaching of the Christ child, when we see the progress of mission work in spite of war and hatred, we realize that this Babe is indeed God's own Messenger, the Lord of Hosts, who by His omnipotent grace still carries on the extension of His Church. Sing and rejoice, and 1 Cor. 15:58.

3

In the Old Testament Christ's coming into the flesh is frequently linked up with His coming on the Last Day. His first advent was lowly. The second is described Luke 21:27; 22:69; 2 Thess. 1:7-10. Already He is rising up out of His holy habitation in heaven. Luke 21:10, 11. In the howling of destructive tempests, in the fury of devastating conflagrations, in the roaring of cannon and the whining of shells, in the noise and tumult of battle, we hear the rumblings foreboding His coming. Hence v. 13. "Flesh" is all mankind, God's enemy by nature. Cease your enmity, Ps. 2. Kiss the Son; acknowledge Him as your God and Savior; consecrate yourselves to His service. Then you will

become His people. Otherwise you are hopelessly lost. Mark 16:16; John 3:36; 1 John 5:10.

This word is directed to us also. If we do not understand God's ways and judgments of today, be still! It is the Lord of Hosts, your Savior, who once lay in the manger at Bethlehem for your redemption, that rules the universe for the welfare of His own. We may suffer hardships, depression, hunger, poverty. Be still! All these tribulations are for those who see in the Babe of Bethlehem their everlasting Prince of Peace, the harbingers of a glorious and everlasting redemption from all evil. Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:21, 23. This Lord can and will be a wall of fire round about His own, Zech. 2:5, in evil days as well as in good, on the battlefield as well as in the safety of our homes. He can and will save to the uttermost them that put their trust in Him. Be still, and sing, and rejoice, and thank God for sending His Son to be the Savior of all mankind.

TH. LAETSCH

Sunday after Christmas

Is. 28:14-19

On this Sunday after Christmas the echoes of the great festival we have celebrated are still reverberating through the land. But even now the echoes of Christmas are growing fainter. Today is not only the Sunday after Christmas, but it is the last Sunday of the present year, and this causes us to think seriously about the waning year and the dawning new year.

This time is always a serious time for thinking people. It is serious especially in these days of dreadful warfare. At a time like this some try to bolster their failing spirits with false hopes, but we, the children of God, turn to our only refuge.

Christ the Only True Refuge

1. *Multitudes seek safety in a false refuge*
2. *Christians know and find the only safe Refuge*

1

A. Context and historical setting. Isaiah is speaking in serious times. King Ahaz had sinned by seeking protection against Syria not in the Lord but in Assyria, thereby making this country a scourge of Judah. This led to the invasion on the part of Sennacherib, which was definitely threatening at the time this chapter of the Book of Isaiah was penned. Hence the days were similar to our days, days of warfare and threatening invasion.

B. V. 14. This is a warning addressed to unbelieving rulers, scorning the word and judgment of the Lord. Cf. Ps. 1:1. Text emphasizes that those who ruled were scornful men. Always a sad

situation when the heads of a nation depart from God. This was true in Israel. Certainly these rulers in Jerusalem, the Lord's city, should have been faithful; but they were not. Their wicked example influenced others. Sad also today that the rulers of so many nations are far from God. Certainly it is a situation that should give us grave concern and solicit our earnest prayers. Jer. 29:7.

C. The false security of these scornful rulers is depicted in v. 15. These people thought that all was well. In their carnal security they felt sure of their lives even when the most dreadful judgments were abroad, as if they had made a bargain with death. To the Christian, who is at peace with His God through Christ, death comes at the right time and in the right manner. But to think of making a league with death while through sin we are at war with God is the greatest absurdity. In their self-confidence those scornful men thought that they would fare better than others and that the flood of invasion would pass them by. V. 15 c indicates that they had made their refuge in lies and in deceit; they trusted in their shrewdness, in their diplomacy, in their ability to make covenants with the rulers of other countries. They felt safe, but their refuge was uncertain and unsafe.

D. Let us not make the mistake of these people. Let us not trust in diplomacy. We know how often this has failed. Let us not think of the might of arms at this time. They have failed in times past, and they can fail again. Such things in themselves are a false, unsafe refuge.

E. Disaster was proclaimed to such as were scornful of God and His judgments. Vv. 17-19. Stress the heaping of expressions which indicate the doom that was to come upon the rulers. Just what they did not expect would happen. It would strike them, for "they would be trodden down by it."

F. The words of our text are a warning to all those who give themselves up to a false security, who trust in the unsafe refuge of good luck, clever diplomacy and lies. Also a warning for Christians. We do not wish to be swept away by destruction. Therefore turn to only safe Refuge, the one offered in the text.

2

A. V. 16. Now the Lord speaks. He does not lie. He never makes a mistake. Ps. 33:4. It is the word of the faithful God.

B. V. 16 b. God makes the promise of a safe refuge, a certain foundation and cornerstone. He speaks of the Rock upon which His Church is firmly founded. The "tried Stone," one who is Himself tried and tested and one who also tries and tests the hearts of the faithful. A "precious Cornerstone," a stone where the walls meet and thus make them stronger. "A sure Foundation," to stress

the firmness and the solidity and safety. All these expressions point to the real security of the Refuge which God has provided.

C. We do not have to ask who this foundation of the Church is. We know that this promise of God was literally fulfilled in the Christ child, the Man of the cross. Cp. 1 Pet. 2:6-8; Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:11; Rom. 9:33; Eph. 2:20. In Christ all the promises made here have been fulfilled. Christ came; the Church was founded; the Church has been a refuge for the weary, a safe hiding place.

D. V. 16 c. "He that believeth shall not make haste." This is an appeal to have faith in God and in the Christ whom He has sent into the world. It is also a word of encouragement. Those who put their trust in the Lord Jesus, the safe Refuge, will not have to be ashamed. They will not have to flee in haste when disaster comes; but, trusting in the Lord, they can meet all situations in life and in death and are safe in eternity. This is real comfort for us in these trying times, real comfort to us at the end of the year.

E. L. ROSCHKE

New Year's Eve

Psalm 46

The year 1942 will be remembered as a year of war and strife, of confusion and perplexity. And the future is dark. We do not know what changes are coming. Is not the liberty of conscience we now enjoy in danger? 2 Cor. 4:8: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair." But only those can apply these words to themselves who say with Paul 2 Cor. 4:18. For comfort and courage we must look beyond this visible world, made miserable by sin, to the invisible truths revealed to us in Holy Scripture.

The Eternal Security of the Church

1. *God is our Refuge and Strength*
2. *All earthly powers fail, but the Church endures*

1

V. 1. This is the declaration of all those who by faith in Christ Jesus are God's children. They look up to their Father in heaven for help in trouble. Yes, there is trouble everywhere. What will the future bring? Will the Church be permitted to continue its work without intervention? Will the present economic order remain? Will death-dealing epidemics depopulate our land? Will our cities be bombed, must many of our loved ones die? We are beset with troubles. What must be our comfort? This: "God is our Refuge, a very present Help." We must always remember that.

Vv. 2, 3. We need fear nothing. There are terrors coming, much greater than the present ones, the terrors connected with the final destruction of the world. Describe them briefly.

Vv. 4, 5. Here is the reason why we need not fear. The city of God is the Church, the communion of saints, the congregation of believers, all true children of God. In their midst is a river; there flow the streams of living waters, the means of grace, which convey and seal forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation to us, and thus make us glad. Through the means of grace God is in the midst of us. Therefore we shall not be moved, shall not perish. God's almighty hand protects us. "Right early." Our troubles fade away like the passing night. God's help is ever with us, even in the midst of trouble.

Vv. 6, 7. Behold, what our God can do. Let the heathen rage, let nations boast about their might and power. God rebukes them and they are crushed, their ragings become wailings, their might hopeless prostration and abject futility. Jesus lifts up His finger, and the storm subsides. But the Church triumphs: "The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our Refuge." There is the eternal security of the Church.

2

Vv. 8, 9. Behold what the Lord can do. History tells us about the mighty Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Many mighty, seemingly invincible nations have vanished from the face of the earth. What happened to the greatest and most dreadful power of this world, Popery? The Word of God was the sword from which it received its death wound.

And God's power is as great as ever. All the terrible modern weapons, the bombers, the warships, the cannon, the lies, etc., are less than nothing against the almighty power of God. V. 10. Cp. Is. 40: 21-25. Remember the majesty of Almighty God, O man. Away with your pride, your impudent boastfulness. Remember Almighty God is above you. He demands that you give Him due honor and respect. Woe to you, woe to the nations that deny Him such honor. Woe to you if you fail to see the handwriting on the wall in the past and present dire visitations of the Lord.

But the Church—the family of God, His children who believe and appreciate His mercy in Christ Jesus, worship Him as the Author of their salvation—will endure forever. Not even the gates of hell shall prevail against them. No one shall pluck the believers out of His hand. Cf. Luke 12: 32. The very Flood that caused such desolations on the earth carried Noah's ark to safety. Thus even troubles must serve the good of God's children. Indeed, the terrible collapse of this world must mark the final and complete liberation of the Church and its triumphant entry into heaven.

Hymn 262.

H. J. BOUMAN

New Year's Day

Psalm 121

The profound appeal of many psalms lies not only in their marvelous content, but also in their sublime imagery. That is evidently the case in other favorite psalms, such as Psalm 23, Psalm 46, Psalm 90.—In this case a scene of the great out-of-doors, with a majestic mountain in the background and the great expanse of the sky above, with the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night. One cannot escape the impression of majesty and of power, on the one hand, and of the protection afforded by the divine government and providence, on the other. These considerations are particularly valuable at the beginning of a new year, on the threshold of momentous events. We consider

A Psalm of Trust for the Beginning of a New Year

1. *It expresses confidence in God as the almighty and merciful Keeper and Helper*
2. *It emphasizes the certainty of the fulfillment of His promises*

I

A. The very names applied to God bring out this confidence: *Lord*, that is, the God of the covenant, the heavenly Ruler who was the mainstay of His people through the ages, as He Himself declared in His amazing revelation of His glory before Moses, Ex. 34:6, 7; *Keeper*, Guardian, one who extends His guarding and protecting hand over those who are His own, to whom the believers may freely look for protection, Ps. 17:8; *Shade*, a designation frequently used in Holy Scripture as an image of protection and security, Num. 14:9; Ps. 91:1; Is. 32:2.

B. This trust describes the Lord's merciful attitude, the fact that the believer's help comes from the Lord, v. 2, that He is the sure Source of all the assistance which we need, also in the future; that, specifically, His watchful care will not permit the Christian's foot to be moved, so that it will stumble and cause a fall, v. 3; all this being connected with the blessed fact that the Keeper of Israel is not in need of slumber or sleep, that His is a continual watchfulness, Ps. 139:1-13. V. 4.

C. Hence the believer in full trustfulness and absolute confidence in this almighty and merciful Lord lifts up his eyes to the hills from whence his help is bound to come in the manner best suited to his needs, v. 1. The expression "lift up mine eyes" is emphatic in bringing out this trust and assurance.

A. The believer's trust is brought out also by the description of possible dangers which may beset his path, the smiting of the sun by day and of the moon by night, the references bringing out the certainty of the heavenly Father's sheltering presence at all times. In tropical lands not only the sun in his full power is dangerous for the uncovered head, but also the moon. See Is. 49:40; Ps. 102:5; Jonah 4:8. This fact is to be applied to any condition or situation in which harm may come to the believer, in agreement with Ps. 91:3-6.

B. Finally, therefore, the believer expressly states his assurance of the Lord's protection, the psalmist so declaring and the heart of every true child of God responding. There is no restriction with regard to the Lord's help from *all evil*. And the significant fact is brought out of the *soul's* being preserved or kept (as the seat of life and of the confidence of faith itself). To keep us in all our ways, our going out and our coming in, in all the tasks and duties of life, under all circumstances of life: that is the glorious assurance which is ours on the basis of this psalm. We are certain that our heavenly Father will fulfill His promises, in His unbounded grace and mercy. Deut. 28:6; Prov. 2:8; 3:6.

P. E. KRETMANN



List of Texts for the Church Year

For the convenience of our readers we supply the Old Testament texts, as adopted by the Synodical Conference, on which outlines will be published in 1943.

Sunday	Text	Sunday	Text
1st Advent	Ps. 24	2d after Easter	Ps. 23
2d Advent	Deut. 18:15-22	3d after Easter	Ps. 100
3d Advent	Is. 61:1-6	4th after Easter	Jer. 15:15-21
4th Advent	Hag. 2:7-10	5th after Easter	Gen. 18:16-33
Christmas	Is. 9:2-7	Ascension	Ps. 47
2d Christmas Day	Zech. 2:10-13	Sunday after Ascension	Is. 55
Sunday after Christmas	Is. 28:14-19	Pentecost	Ezek. 36:22-28
New Year	Ps. 121	Pentecost Monday	Ps. 80:15-20
Sunday after New Year's	Lam. 3:22-33	Trinity Sunday	Num. 6:22-27
Epiphany	Is. 60:1-11	1st after Trinity	Prov. 11:23-31
1st after Epiphany	Ps. 78:1-7	2d after Trinity	Judg. 2:1-12
2d after Epiphany	Ps. 104:24-35	3d after Trinity	2 Chron. 33:9-16
3d after Epiphany	Dan. 6:10-23	4th after Trinity	Is. 12:1-6
4th after Epiphany	1 Kings 19:9b-18	5th after Trinity	Ezra 3:1-15
5th after Epiphany	Gen. 11:1-9	6th after Trinity	Gen. 4:3-16
6th after Epiphany	Gen. 28:10-22	7th after Trinity	1 Kings 17:1-16
Septuagesima	Jer. 31:31-34	8th after Trinity	Jer. 23:21-32
Sexagesima	1 Sam. 17:42-51	9th after Trinity	Ex. 32:1-14
Quinquagesima	Jonah 3:1 to 4:11	10th after Trinity	Deut. 4:23-31
Invocavit	Gen. 3:1-15	11th after Trinity	Micah 2:7-13
Reminiscere	Gen. 22:1-19	12th after Trinity	Ex. 34:29-35
Oculi	Ps. 25	13th after Trinity	Ex. 20:18-24
Laetare	Deut. 7:6-11	14th after Trinity	Num. 21:4-9
Judica	Gen. 14:8-20	15th after Trinity	1 Kings 18:21-40
Palm Sunday	Ps. 8	16th after Trinity	2 Kings 5:8-19a
Maundy Thursday	Ex. 12:1-14	17th after Trinity	1 Sam. 15:13-26
Good Friday	Is. 53	18th after Trinity	Ezek. 3:17-21
Easter	Job 19:23-27	19th after Trinity	Ps. 37:25-40
Easter Monday	Is. 52:7-10	20th after Trinity	2 Kings 2:6-18
1st after Easter		21st after Trinity	Dan. 3:19-30
	2 Sam. 12:1-10, 13, 14	22d after Trinity	Gen. 50:15-23a

Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

The Lutheran Church and Isolation.—At the meeting of Lutheran editors held this fall Editor H. C. Caspersen of the Lutheran Free Church, according to a report in the *Lutheran Standard*, pointed out that there is a common factor among Lutherans, "namely, our common adherence to the Augsburg Confession and to Luther's Small Catechism." He pleaded for "a friendly, sympathetic attitude toward the World Council of Churches in order to counteract the tendency toward isolation that has developed in certain countries." In an address which President Conrad Bergendoff of the Augustana College and Seminary delivered on the same occasion, he spoke, as the *Lutheran Standard* reports, "about the relationship of our Lutheran Church to other churches." Some of his remarks are summarized in that report as follows, "He began with the indisputable assertion that in America we Lutherans shall have to live with Christians of other denominations. Through his study of American history he has come to understand some of the problems of the other churches, and he is not so sure that we Lutherans have solved our own problems much more successfully than other churches have solved their problems. We Lutherans have been inclined to meet problems which rise in America with answers which were worked out in Europe, perhaps centuries ago. Today . . . we do not know where we stand over against other Christians. We arrive at our attitude toward non-Lutheran churches and ecumenical movements too quickly and are unwilling to try to discover whether the attitudes we take fit the real conditions."

What must be our reaction? The Lutheran Church was built on the principle that the Word of God must be adhered to at all hazards, that whatever is in keeping with the Scriptures is right and whatever is against the Scriptures, even if it should be sanctioned by the organized Church or by human reason or by tradition, is wrong. Every true Lutheran will agree that that position must be maintained. If such a course leads to isolation, we regret such an outcome, but we cannot on that account change our course. Isolation is wrong if it is chosen on its own account. If it is thrust upon us on account of our adherence to the Scriptures, we have to bear it cheerfully as a cross which is unavoidable. At the same time, no true Lutheran should deny that he owes his fellow men, created by the same God as he, redeemed by the same precious blood of the Savior, a tremendous debt, that of acquainting them with the full treasures of Jesus Christ. That obligation, too, must be discharged. Jesus, we do well to remember, addresses the Christians as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. He does not want them to keep their light under a bushel, but to put it on a lamp stand. In charting our course these various truths must be borne in mind.

A.

Union Resolutions of the American Lutheran Church.—When the A. L. C. in the first half of October held its biennial meeting in Mendota, Ill., quite naturally the question of fellowship with other synods formed

a topic of discussion. The A. L. C. has been negotiating with the Missouri Synod about the establishment of fellowship since 1936. Simultaneously it carried on negotiations with the United Lutheran Church of America, although the work was done by two different committees. As a result of its negotiations with the Missouri Synod the A. L. C. commissioners drew up the so-called Declaration, in which they stated the position of their church body on questions on which a statement was required. The results of its negotiations with the U. L. C. A. were laid down in the so-called Pittsburgh Agreement, which in its three paragraphs speaks of the attitude Lutherans should take concerning lodge membership and unionism and on the doctrine of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. At the convention of the Missouri Synod in 1938 the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod and the *Declaration* of the A. L. C. commissioners were declared to constitute a sufficient doctrinal basis for future church fellowship. A similar declaration was made by the A. L. C. at its meeting in Sandusky in the same year. In 1940 the Missouri Synod commissioners stated that according to their conviction five factors still prevented the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship between the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod, to wit:

1. The affiliation of the A. L. C. with the other synods forming the American Lutheran Conference, all of which are not in fellowship with the Missouri Synod;
2. The affiliation of the Missouri Synod with the other synods of the Synodical Conference whose consent will have to be sought before the Missouri Synod can enter into fraternal relations with some other body;
3. Disagreement concerning various points of doctrine or fellowship caused chiefly by statements in the Sandusky resolutions of the A. L. C.;
4. The approach of the A. L. C. to the U. L. C. A. based on the Pittsburgh Agreement which Missouri does not consider adequate;
5. Matters of practice especially such as pertain to lodge membership and unionism.

When the American Lutheran Conference held its meeting in November, 1940, at Minneapolis, Minn., the hopes of Missourians that the A. L. C. would make a strong effort to improve conditions in its sister synods of the American Lutheran Conference in matters of doctrine and practice were not realized. The convention of the Missouri Synod held in Fort Wayne 1941 devoted a good deal of time to a discussion of the fellowship question. While it was gratefully recognized that the fellowship negotiations were not in vain, the Synod was convinced that fellowship between the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod could not yet be established. It was resolved, however, to continue the official conferences, and the Committee on Lutheran Union was instructed to draw up with the A. L. C. commissioners and with representatives of the other Synodical Conference bodies one common document containing the articles of doctrinal agreement, because it was felt in many quarters that the method of bringing about fellowship on the basis of two documents (the *Brief Statement* and the *Declaration*) was not satisfactory. The resolutions which were adopted by the A. L. C. at its recent meeting form the next official document which has to be considered in a study of the fellowship question. We herewith reprint the resolutions:

Resolutions Adopted by American Lutheran Church

"Intersynodical fellowship is a matter of deep concern to us. Faithful efforts have been put forth, and considerable progress has been made. We thank God for His blessings, and we express our appreciation to our brethren who have served on these committees. We offer the following resolution for adoption:

"WHEREAS, The Committees on Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church have negotiated with both the United Lutheran Church in America and the Missouri Synod to the end of establishing Pulpit and Altar Fellowship with these honorable bodies; and

"WHEREAS, The American Lutheran Church has adopted the Pittsburgh Agreement and accepted the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod in the light of the *Declaration* of the Commissioners of the American Lutheran Church as a basis for pulpit and altar fellowship; and

"WHEREAS, Though these documents — the Pittsburgh Agreement on the one hand, and the *Brief Statement* and *Declaration* on the other — differ in wording, yet both express the true position of the American Lutheran Church; and

"WHEREAS, The United Lutheran Church in America has adopted the Pittsburgh Agreement; and the *Declaration* of our Commissioners in connection with the *Brief Statement* has found acceptance within the Missouri Synod and was proposed by the intersynodical commissioners of the Missouri Synod as an integral part of the doctrinal basis for future church fellowship; and

"WHEREAS, To our regret fellowship has not resulted since apparently in both bodies there are large and influential groups in disagreement therewith:

"Therefore Be It Resolved, That the American Lutheran Church declare its readiness to establish pulpit and altar fellowship with either or both of these honorable church bodies on the basis of their full and wholehearted acceptance of, and adherence to, either of these documents, in the hope that the existing obstacles may be removed and that such pulpit and altar fellowship may be declared at an early date; and therefore, that the Commission on Lutheran unity be continued."

It will be observed that these resolutions do not state whether the A. L. C. is willing to have its commissioners together with the commissioners of the Missouri Synod draw up one common document setting forth the doctrinal agreement that has been reached. It is evident that the A. L. C. does not go beyond its resolutions of 1940. In the Missouri Synod the hope had been entertained that in these days of doctrinal confusion the A. L. C. would issue a statement constituting a strong trumpet blast in behalf of conservative Lutheranism, a statement serving notice both to the synods of the American Lutheran Conference and the U. L. C. A. that the A. L. C. will not endorse laxity and looseness in doctrine and practice. We are afraid that its resolutions will not be interpreted as having this significance.

The resolutions, it is true, do not justify the statements made in the public press that the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church of America are now joining hands and are establishing pulpit and altar fellowship. The careful reader will see that the A. L. C. makes the establishing of fellowship contingent on the "full and wholehearted acceptance of, and adherence to," the respective document of agreement. It is well known that in the U. L. C. A.

there has been sharp dissent from the position taken in the Pittsburgh Agreement, and it is difficult to see that in the face of such a dissent there can be full and wholehearted acceptance of, and adherence to, this document in the U. L. C. A. in the near future. If the American Lutheran Church insists on this part of its resolutions, fellowship with the U. L. C. A. may be a very remote matter. Developments of the next years will have to show whether the conservative element in the A. L. C., which is quite strong, will be able to assert itself and successfully oppose the wave of unionistic sentiment in its midst, which likewise, sad to say, does not lack force and numbers.

A.

The Federal Council and the U. L. C. A. — The question which confronted the U. L. C. A. convention in Louisville whether it should change its status in its relations to the Federal Council of Churches and instead of having a consultative membership advance to full membership was answered in the negative. There had been a strong movement to make the U. L. C. A. a full member of the Federal Council. In fact, the latter organization had invited the U. L. C. A. to take upon itself full membership in the Council. While we deplore even this consultative relationship, we are glad to note that the convention declined to accept the invitation and to accede to the wishes of those who urged full membership. In the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* a symposium was published of prominent U. L. C. A. members expressing their views on the question that was mentioned above. Some of the contributors said things which have to grieve a conservative Lutheran. A number of the writers entirely overlook the fact that in the Federal Council flagrant denial of precious truths is tolerated, that, for instance, proponents and signers of the iniquitous Auburn Affirmation with its denial of things that are absolutely fundamental in the Christian faith hold membership as well as others that are more positive in their Christian teachings. One writer advances these five arguments for acceptance of the Council's invitation: 1. A united spiritual front is needed to preserve and strengthen the interests and convictions that are peculiar to Protestantism. 2. The U. L. C. A. ought to have a full share in serving the country along the lines mapped out by the Council. 3. It ought to be made plain that the U. L. C. A. "stands for the democratic tradition in Lutheranism as over against reactionary isolationism." 4. One serves best by joining one's fellow men in solving the problems that confront all. 5. In this way the cause of Lutheran union will be aided.

The last argument strikes one as particularly strange inasmuch as several of the contributors take the very opposite view and urge that on account of the cause of Lutheran union full membership in the Council should be refused. The writer quoted, who urges full membership, says, "It is less than honest to plead that we must not join the Council now, lest it interfere with the progress of Lutheran union in America. Such a plea serves only to increase the distrust which is helping to keep American Lutherans divided. If other Lutheran groups refuse union with us because we hold membership in the Council, we are dishonest in planning membership after the union has been effected. Lutheran union can be built only upon the foundation of absolute honesty and mutual trust. Let us be our best selves then.

Let us emphasize the democratic, American, co-operative type of Lutheranism which has always distinguished us at our best. If having the courage of our convictions, if being our best selves, is going to stand in the way of Lutheran union, then may the Lord have mercy on the cause of union. This writer is all out for Lutheran union. But it is possible to pay too high a price for it." In a similar way a number of other writers argue for the view that the U. L. C. A. should take upon itself full membership in the Council.

One of the contributors opposing the move is Dr. O. W. Heick of Ellis, Kans. He stresses that some of the objectives of the Federal Council strike "at paragraph 2 of the Pittsburgh Agreement (on Unionism) and the Galesburg Rule, which have guided a large section of the Church in the past. If the U. L. C. A. accepts the invitation to full membership, the development towards sound confessional Lutheranism would thereby receive a serious setback. The confessionally-minded among us will be forced into opposition. All the progress that has been made since the days of Schmucker's 'American Lutheranism' would be jeopardized at once. This would spell the end of all hopes of unity within the Lutheran Church in America. We do not suggest that the delegates to the Louisville convention should be guided, in any degree, by a consideration of what is expedient. Union or no union with the other Lutheran bodies: a vital principle of truth is at stake. By subscribing to the constitution of the Federal Council we would surrender our right to bear witness to the whole truth of Scripture as proclaimed in our Confessions over against the peculiarities of the Reformed tradition. The history of the Lutheran Church in Germany is full of evil portent in this respect. By joining the Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchenbund, the Lutheran Church first had to tone down, officially, what is unique in the Wittenberg Reformation, and later it became almost extinct when, in 1933, the Kirchenbund merged into the Deutsche Evangelische Kirche. *Obsta principiis!*" Finally Dr. Heick remarks that what the Federal Council stands for is chiefly the social gospel. He correctly says, "Time and again the Council has equated the Kingdom with a world free of war, guilt, and fear. But the Kingdom is not humanity refined. It is truly God's kingdom, transcending *every* achievement of the human race." Arguments such as those Dr. Heick utters were effective at the U. L. C. A. convention in Louisville. May God grant that they are heeded to an ever larger extent in his church body and outside of it.

A.

Is This Lutheran Doctrine? — We were amazed to find the following paragraphs in an article by Dr. W. H. Greever published in the *Lutheran* of September 30, 1942, page 19.

"This sacrament of communion is such because through it Christ promises *His real presence and special communication of Himself to those who come to His table in faith*. He declares that He makes His real presence effective to them by giving His body and blood to them, in, with, and under the bread and wine. This gift is not physically discerned, but is spiritually received, without change in either the bread or wine with which it is mystically connected.

"The purpose of this sacrament is to bestow the gift of grace by which faith is confirmed and assurance of forgiveness of sin is attested. It is essential to the health and vigor of the soul. It is God's continued assertion of the personal covenant He made with the individual soul in Baptism."

In His Holy Supper Christ does not merely promise His real presence to those who come in faith. He actually gives to all participants, believers or unbelievers, His body and His blood. Does the *Lutheran* deny this? Nor is the Lord's Supper essential to the health and vigor of the soul; else it would have to be given to little children.

T. L.

Rededication to Missions.—The *Watchman-Examiner* (July 2, 1942) reports editorially: "Prior to the Cleveland Convention, rumors were circulated among Northern Baptists in certain places that the day of foreign missions was past because of so many closed doors. The answer to all this kind of talk was given by the Cleveland meeting. In a unanimous action, Northern Baptists voted the following resolution:

WHEREAS, We as Northern Baptists believe that the foreign mission cause is God's cause and that it rests secure in His abiding purpose for all mankind; and

WHEREAS, The difficult days through which we are now passing have helped us to see that the world mission of Christ is no fair-weather enterprise, but the most serious, the most sacrificial, and the most steadfast movement in human history; and

WHEREAS, History reveals that in times of stress God has led His people forward in the extension of His kingdom, this being made possible because in such times Christians have evidenced a deeper desire to share; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we as Northern Baptists reaffirm our faith in the adequacy of Christ for the whole world and the whole of life and in patience, humility, and love rededicate ourselves to world-wide missions in His name."

A Lutheran committee on resolutions might in some places have framed the wording in a somewhat different way. For example, for the words "The foreign mission cause rests secure in His abiding purpose for all mankind," we would have said: "It rests secure in His good and gracious will toward the salvation of all men." Nevertheless, these resolutions, in their general scope, are so praiseworthy that we offer them here for adoption by our own churches in a form suitable to their circumstances. Certainly, the day of foreign missions is *not* past! In view of Matt. 28:19, 20 no Christian has a right to take such a defeatist attitude. Many doors may be closed just now, but (unless Judgment Day should intervene) we may rest assured that upon our earnest intercessions God again will open them as He sees fit. Christ's last great commission makes it obligatory upon us to evangelize all nations unto the end of the world. We are happy to know that also the Northern Presbyterians at their last general convention adopted similar resolutions for greater after-the-war foreign mission work. May the spirit of holy willingness be richly given us for sharing with others the inestimable treasures of Christ's precious Gospel.

J. T. M.

Financial Figures.—In the *National Lutheran Council Bulletin* an article on Lutheran giving appeared which was of more than usual interest. The contents are well summarized in *The Lutheran* of October 21:

"In 1941 the Lutherans of the United States and Canada gave \$58,352,808 for the work of their churches, reports the National Lutheran Council. This sum is considerably above the total of recent years. It was given by 3,573,383 people and averages \$16.33 apiece.

"Giving per person has been on the way up among Lutherans. In 1937 they contributed \$13.88 apiece; 1938 — \$14.43; 1939 — \$15.01; 1940 — \$15.13.

"Lutherans of the Augustana Synod are the most generous givers over this five-year period. Missouri Synod is next; United Danish third, American Lutheran fourth. Highest in per capita giving to general church purposes, other than local congregational expenses, is the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

"Lutherans as a whole are slightly above the average of giving among Protestants of America.

"Lutheran church membership in the United States and Canada totaled 5,052,321 at the close of 1941."

The Exegesis of Premillennialists.—In *Bibliotheca Sacra* an article which appeared on its pages in 1888 is reprinted in which the position taken by premillennialists is defended. Speaking of the exegetical procedure of premillennialists, the writer says, "Whether their conclusion be right or wrong, their arguments evidently depend on the rigid application of the grammatico-historical, inductive method of interpretation which Bengel in the last century did so much to introduce and which, it is not too much to say, has secured the adhesion of the chief part of the most eminent exegetes of our day. Premillennialists, therefore, are everywhere marked by the most emphatic rejection and repudiation alike of the allegorical, the dogmatic, and the so-called rational systems of interpretation as also of the eschatological conclusions which the application of one or other of these methods has led men to adopt."

We are willing to believe that premillennialists desire faithfully to follow the Scriptures in their teachings, but when their exegetical methods are spoken of, we have to point out that in these methods there becomes apparent a sad inconsistency in adherence to the Scriptures. Whoever wishes to be thoroughly Scriptural in his interpretation, must, as will be granted by all, accept the principle *Scriptura Scripturam interpretatur*. This principle, however, implies that the dark, obscure passages must be interpreted in the light of passages that are clear and without any ambiguity. It is this implication of the principle mentioned which is not observed by the premillennialists. They do not give to the doctrinal passages of Scripture that are notable for their clarity that pre-eminence which they must have in the eyes of all who wish to understand God's Word. If this defect in the exegetical procedure of premillennialists were recognized by them, there would be hope of reaching an understanding with this large group of Christians.

A.

A Premillennialist Warns His Brethren. — *Bibliotheca Sacra*, which, by the way, next year will observe its centenary, publishing its centennial issue January 1, 1943 (the first number of Volume 100), has of late been traveling under the flag of premillennialism. All the more remarkable is a warning contained in its editorial section in an article written by Miner Brodhead Stearns against sensational, unbalanced interpretations of Scripture passages having to do with the Last Things, interpretations which make the whole Christian Church the butt of ridicule and censure. The writer says:

"No thinking person would deny that the world is passing through the most extraordinary days of its history. The Bible predicts extraordinary days during the final period of this age and leading up to the glorious visible return of Christ to this earth. Therefore it is very easy to jump to the conclusions that we must now be in those end times, and hence many are prone to seek for fulfillments of Bible prophecies in current events. But while it is perfectly proper to be looking for the fulfillment of prophecy, there is grave danger that many through an excess of zeal may indulge in wishful thinking and misguided speculations which will do more harm than good to the cause of Christ.

"No one believes more firmly than the editors of *Bibliotheca Sacra* in the verbal inerrancy of the Bible and the literal interpretation of its prophecies, and yet a word of warning is not amiss. Many of us remember how during the first world war some were eager to identify the late Kaiser with the anti-Christ on the basis of Zechariah 11:17 and the fact that his right arm was known to be useless. This mistaken identification was vividly recalled recently when a radio preacher was heard identifying Hitler with the man of sin because the former is not married, and Daniel 11:37 says, 'Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women . . .' That there is a deal of difference between 'the desire of women' in the sense in which the radio speaker took it (doubtless a mistaken interpretation) and marriage has been indicated by frequent references in the news to the fact that Hitler is far from insensible to the attractions of the opposite sex.

"This same radio preacher found further proof that we are already in the time of the end in the fact that Joel 3:10 is now being fulfilled for the first time. Granting that there may be a fair number of plowshares and pruninghooks (or their modern equivalents) among the scrap steel being put into war production today, nevertheless agricultural implements are still being manufactured and given priority, owing to the great importance of food in the Allied war effort. When Joel 3:10 is fulfilled, it seems evident that this transformation of agricultural implements into the weapons of war will take place on a far larger scale than anything we have yet seen. Were the speaker's supposition correct, we should be on the very eve of Armageddon, and then what becomes of the rapture of the Church which most premillennial Bible interpreters look for as the next event to be fulfilled in the scheme of prophecy? It is our belief that the Church will be caught away out of this world at least seven years before Arma-

geddon takes place and before the man of sin is revealed as such. For this manifestation awaits, according to 2 Thessalonians 2:6,7, the removal of the Body of Christ from this earth.

"Should any think that this warning against hasty interpretation is really not needed, let him remember the case of the head of a Bible Institute in Wales who in 1939 made the prediction that there would be no European War in this generation, since God had planned to evangelize the whole world during the next thirty years. When the European war did break out, this brother tried to maintain his position by asserting that there would be no general European war in this generation, and published a booklet to that effect. But that was before May, 1940. Let us therefore take warning from these and other examples which could be cited. God's Word is sure, and we are eagerly awaiting the coming of Christ in the air to take His bride to Himself. But let us beware of vain attempts to foresee the future beyond what God has revealed to us, and let us be extremely cautious in our interpretation of what has been revealed, that we bring no reproach on the name of Christ and the sane and prudent interpretation of Prophecy."

The general tendency of this article is altogether commendable. May it be heeded by all who read it. The author, of course, is himself hopelessly entangled in the net of chiliastic vagaries, as his reference to "the rapture" and his statement that it must precede Armageddon by at least seven years amply testify. Perhaps by and by experiences of interpreters like those which he points to will lead him and others to abandon altogether such follies and to be satisfied with the guidance of the clear, unmistakable words of Holy Scripture as to what lies ahead in the future.

A.

Orthodoxy Visits Union Seminary.—In the *Presbyterian Guardian* (October 10, 1942) it is reported that a number of orthodox Presbyterian tracts were recently sent to the students at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, by the Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The results of this venture were most gratifying. With regard to Machen's tract *Is the Bible Right About Jesus?* the article says: "I am glad that I can say that the reaction to this literature on the part of the students was on the whole quite favorable. Several of them expressed to me their appreciation for having received the tracts. The name of Dr. Machen was familiar to most of the students, inasmuch as his New Testament Greek *For Beginners* is used as the textbook in the Introductory Greek Class. One of the students told me that he was surprised to find how much he agreed with Dr. Machen's argument for the trustworthiness of the gospel narratives. There was only one who criticized the tract unfavorably, a student of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., who admitted that he had read only the first few pages of the tract. A number of students displayed interest in the facts presented in [the tract] *The Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Action*. Even before the literature was sent, several had inquired of me concerning the number of ministers and members of our church, as well as the facts in connection with its formation. A few of the 'neo-orthodox' students, in particular, expressed a measure of sympathy for our principles and aims as opposed to the bankrupt liberalism that

continues to dominate the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. One such student from that denomination — one of the most brilliant students in the seminary — even told me that, while he could not go all the way with us in our view on the authority of Scripture, he was convinced that our emphasis on the system of Reformed doctrine was basically sound as over against the anti-doctrinal tendency of liberalism."

The concluding paragraph is perhaps the most important in the report since it points out a deplorable neglect of which many Bible Christians are guilty. Assuming that students and other persons in liberal circles are not open to conviction, they decline to send them such literature as might enlighten and win them for Christ. Christian publicity work dare not stop today when so many in the liberal camps are willing to listen to what Christians have to say. By placing such literature into our libraries, public reading rooms, and other places where confessional Christian writings may reach people, we may show the way of salvation to many whom we could reach in no other way. The paragraph reads: "The reaction to this literature of our Christian Education Committee has increased my conviction that the great mass of liberal preachers have never seen a consistent, scholarly presentation of the orthodox standpoint. Union Seminary, like other liberal institutions, practically ignores the work of the great conservative scholars, with the result that the students conclude that the liberal view is the only intellectually defensible position. The circulation of the literature of our Christian Education Committee in liberal circles can perform excellent service in dispersing some of the clouds of ignorance and prejudice that hover over the Modernist camp."

J. T. M.

Going to Canossa? — The new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. William Temple, is known for his unionistic tendencies. After trying hard to unite all Protestants, he now advocates a plan which will take in even Roman Catholicism. In order that the poor, weary, blood-covered world as soon as the war is ended might be put into a better state, a committee for the inauguration of improvements is proposed in which the large Protestant bodies, the Roman Catholic, and the Greek Orthodox churches are to be represented. But not only are all these bodies to co-operate in this broad endeavor; the Pope or a substitute whom he may appoint is to be the chairman of the joint committee. The Pope probably would hail any overture made to him of this nature with a great deal of glee and would regard it as a virtual capitulation of Protestants, a real trip of his opponents to Canossa. He might announce that he would very gladly assume the chairmanship and would do so with the understanding that his appointment to that position meant that he was recognized as the head of all Christendom. The suggestion of Dr. Temple does not seem to have fallen on fertile ground. It is noteworthy chiefly because it characterizes the person who made it.

A.

Anent Race Relations. — When the National Baptist Convention, Inc. (a Negro body having four million members and 20,000 churches) recently met in Memphis, Tenn., there was a good deal of complaint of ill-treatment accorded colored people in the United States. The matter may take on major proportions, and it is good for our pastors to be in-

formed; hence we submit a list of the points which the president of the body, D. V. Jemison of Selma, Ala., enumerated as requests of the Negro. He stated, "Shall the Negroes in this country, for which our fathers fought in every war that has swept across its bosom, be satisfied with less than our guaranteed constitutional liberty? This is all the Negro asks: 1. Abolish legal injustice against Negroes. 2. Stamp out race discriminations. 3. Prevent lynching, burning, or torturing of black people. 4. Assure every citizen of color the common rights of American citizens. 5. Compel equal accommodations in railroad travel, irrespective of color, when same fare is paid. 6. Secure for Negro children equal opportunity to public school education through fair apportionment of public education funds. 7. Emancipate in fact as well as in name a race of more than thirteen million American born citizens." It is not the function of this journal to propose remedial measures for an ominous situation. May God grant our statesmen and legislatures and voters wisdom to discover and to follow the proper course. A.

Brief Items. — Jehovah's Witnesses have published a new version of the Bible, according to *Religious News Service*, which contains passages from the King James, American Revised, and Douay (Catholic) versions. This, Nathan H. Knorr explains, is to permit workers to answer questions in field work. Mr. Knorr has succeeded the late Judge Rutherford as head of the sect. — *Christian Century*.

One of our exchanges reports that the Catholic bishop of Mobile has again issued the warning that "the Sacraments are to be denied to all parents not sending their children to the Catholic school." This is endeavoring to build the Church by legalistic measures.

Wilbur Glenn Voliva, head of the religious colony of Zion, Ill., died yesterday at 72, still holding that the world is flat. The property of the colony was once estimated to have a value of \$11,000,000. Successor of Alexander Dowie, the Australian evangelist who founded the cult in 1901, Mr. Voliva came into the leadership of its affairs in 1906. — *The Christian Century*.

108 candidates have been graduated from our "Seminario Concordia" in Brazil — 82 pastors and 26 teachers. Of these, 79 are now working in six different states of Brazil and 13 in Argentina; one is pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Germany, and four have been called home by the Lord of the Church. — 85 students are enrolled in our Brazilian Seminary now, in 1942, and 9 in our recently established seminary in Argentina. We have no report as to the enrollment in our Crespo College in Argentina. — From clip sheet issued by the Board of South American Missions (for copies write Rev. E. C. Wegehaupt, 1120 Orchard St., Decatur, Ill.).

A minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church, whose letter is published in the *Living Church* of Sept. 6, 1942, writes, discussing the theological seminaries of his church body, "Several of them, if not all, are understaffed and the salaries paid to the faculties woefully small." As far as the feature of being understaffed is concerned, we wonder what he would say if he saw some of the large classes which have to be instructed in our schools.

Father Divine, as one of our exchanges informs us, has transferred headquarters from New York to Philadelphia. The reason for the transfer seems to be a suit brought against him by two former "angels," who charge him with having gotten five thousand dollars from them under false pretenses. It seems that stormy weather lies ahead for the boat of this archdeceiver. At the same time, he is now operating a hotel in Atlantic City where a room can be had at \$2.00 a week and meals at 15 cents each. Will these ultra-attractive prices aid the false prophet somewhat in rehabilitating himself?

The exchanges state that Albert Schweitzer, famous missionary, musician, and New Testament scholar, is well and still active in his African field. What a pity that he is a missionary without a real mission!

A special correspondence to the *Christian Century* describes the third annual Conference of Science, Philosophy, and Religion held at Columbia University in August. A statement adopted by the Conference emphasizes "the intellectual confusion" which exists in the world of scholars, and it calls for new efforts "to come to an understanding as to the nature of reality and the values of human life." Sad to say, the statement does not make mention of God's revelation in the Scriptures as the infallible basis for a true understanding of the world and mankind.

Plans for the Christian World Mission Convocation, first meeting of its kind ever held in this country, indicate that it will definitely be held in Cleveland, December 6-10, as originally intended. The meeting is to convene under the auspices of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America and is expected to bring together many thousands of people from the some 60 denominations which are members of this largest Protestant interdenominational agency.—*The Christian Century*.

It is almost amusing to see with what seriousness the question is debated at which place in the church the American flag and the Christian flag are to be put respectively. Can one imagine that a real controversy would develop on the question whether or not it is an insult to the American flag if it is placed on the left of the preacher as he faces the congregation while the Christian flag is to the right? What a sad commentary on the sense of value which people possess if they vehemently debate such points! In a Presbyterian church in New Jersey the controversy was settled by the removal of the national emblem from the place next to the pulpit (on the left) to a place in the church proper on the right of the congregation.

Somebody in Indiana has started a "Mothers' Back-to-God Prayer Band," an interdenominational endeavor. The intention is to enroll 100,000 mothers in this undertaking. Wednesdays from 10:00 A. M. to 4:00 P. M. a strict fast is to be kept. What an effort!

The *Lutheran Standard*, the official organ of the American Lutheran Church, is observing its centennial. Its first issue appeared September 21, 1842. Conservative Lutherans will gratefully reflect on the role this paper played in leading the Ohio Synod to the appreciation of sound Lutheranism. Of late there have been many unionistic utterances in it,

which have grieved us. May it in the second century of its existence be granted grace from above to be a strong instrument in defending and spreading the faith set forth in the Lutheran Confessions. The centennial number (September 19) is adorned with many interesting pictures and fascinatingly tells the story of the journal.

Lieutenant General Sir William Dobbie, who is now enjoying a furlough in England after perilous months spent as commandant of Malta, has been justly commended for the zeal he manifested in promoting a religious atmosphere among his soldiers and conducting Bible classes in their midst. He is now said to have declared that he was always "unfailingly conscious" of the Lord's impending return. We are wondering whether he has not become the victim of a false, chiliastic, enthusiasm.

From an article in the *Lutheran Companion* we learn that the confessor of St. Bridget, Mäster Mattias, as early as 1350 translated parts of the New Testament into Swedish. He likewise rendered sections of the Old Testament into that language. His translation naturally was based on the Vulgate. It was in 1526 that the first complete edition of the New Testament was printed in Swedish. The translator was Olavus Petri, who was aided by Laurentius Andreae (Mäster Lars). The version was based on the Greek New Testament of Erasmus, and aid was obtained from Erasmus' own Latin translation and from Luther's German version of 1522.

Prof. H. Shelton Smith, incumbent of the chair of Christian ethics at Duke University, is reported in the *Christian Century* to have "made a slashing attack on the 'progressive' element in Protestant religious education. He warned against the evil effect of John Dewey's philosophy in religious education. He denounced all attempts to make of religion a kind of noble fringe edging human experience. A more authoritative place must be given Jesus as the norm for Christian guidance and conduct. . . . His indictment of the modern trend in religious education begins with Bushnell and includes Coe and Bower."

Reporting on the International Council of Religious Education, a Chicago writer says in the *Christian Century*, "More than 200 ministers and secretaries met during the week to plan for the series of 135 one-day conventions which will carry the needed Christian education advance [a four-year program of educational evangelism] to the churches of the country, following Easter. Nearly every State will have meetings. Teams of leaders in Christian education will thus carry to the country their plan for educational evangelism in the home, church, and community." Not being based on unity in Gospel teachings, the venture will not be able to accomplish much.

A glimpse into conditions in the Southland is furnished by an item in the *Christian Century* to the effect that last winter more than two thousand public school teachers in Tennessee resigned to take up defense work because of better pay. The item furthermore states that last spring the rural schools in the Kentucky mountains closed at the end of a seven months' school year and in many of them teachers had to wait long for their small salary checks.

A.

Book Review — Literatur

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Simple Studies in First and Second Corinthians.

Simple Studies in First and Second Thessalonians, First and Second Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

Simple Studies in the Epistles of James, First and Second Peter, First, Second, and Third John, and Jude.

By William L. Pettinghill. Fundamental Truth Publishers, Findlay, Ohio. Each book, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$. Each: 35 cents.

The writer of these "simple studies" is evidently a Fundamentalist and a believer in the vicarious atonement and the justification of sinners through the imputation of Christ's merits. He also has the ability to present important truths in the form of simple and comprehensive outlines. His discussion, for example, of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God in the third book is a masterpiece, as is his analysis of 1 Pet. 3:9, and many other passages. Nevertheless the effect of his presentation is spoiled, in many cases, by his use of Scofield's Bible, with its rampant chiliasm. In the passages which are based upon Scofield some very weird ideas are presented, to say the least, as when the thought of Paul's declaring himself to be born before due time is regarded as an illustration, or instance before the time, of the future national conversion of Israel. The dispensationalism of the author appears also in his reference to the Great Tribulation period preceding the Judgment. If the pastor who desires some simple material on the books concerned will be cautious with regard to such passages, he may derive much value from the study of these books. But this caution must be exercised.

P. E. KRETMANN

Conscience. Lectures Delivered at the River Forest Summer School, 1941. By E. W. A. Koehler, D. D. 39 pages. Stiff paper cover. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 15 cents.

We have here a scholarly and pretty exhaustive treatment of a most important subject. It presents the Scripture teaching on the nature, functions, and treatment of the conscience. Besides, Dr. Koehler is well versed in psychology and knows how to present these matters in popular language.—It is a most important matter. "Conscience is a wonderful gift of God and a powerful help in our work. . . . A live conscience does more in getting our people to observe in their lives what we have taught them than we may ever hope to do by personal influence. . . . In all our teaching, admonition, and comforting let us enlist the services of this co-worker; let us not merely instruct the intellect, but aim to reach the heart and the conscience of our people." (P. 8.) Again: "Only when it is directed and controlled by the Word of God does conscience serve its God-intended purpose." (P. 28.) Once more: "A guilty conscience is the worst thing a man can suffer in this life. . . . There is

nothing in the wide world that can restore peace to a troubled soul except the assurance of God's grace and forgiveness." (P. 36 f.) Our readers will recognize these statements, for our pamphlet is a reprint of an article which appeared in the May 1942 issue of our MONTHLY. They know the value of this treatise and will be glad to tell their friends that it is now within easier reach.

TH. ENGELDER

I Still Believe in God. By Jacob A. Dell. The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio. 256 pages, $7\frac{3}{4} \times 5$. \$2.00.

Professor Dell of Capital University offers this book to the Christian minister for people who ask questions regarding matters of theological teaching and practical ethics. He wishes to help especially our college youth to integrate their thinking and living with the proposition that Christian faith is satisfying and desirable, a faith for such a time as this. He is careful enough to guard against an overestimate of Christian apologetics. He asks his readers to consider that "all that philosophical reasoning and speculation can do for us, the most we can hope to get out of philosophical arguments (like those in this book) is a suggestion of probability."

Because certain things are true as we see them, it is reasonable to suppose that truth lies in a certain direction. That is no proof. It is like the reasoning of the astronomers before the planet Pluto was discovered. Because other planets acted in a certain way, they argued that there must be a hitherto unseen planet moving in a certain orbit in the heavens. But the reasoning did not show anyone that planet. It just argued the probability of its being there. Eventually a telescope discovered it. Then they knew it was there. Even so I cannot show you God with arguments of probability, and that is as far as philosophy can go. Eventually I hope that we shall see Him and know, even as also we are known. It is only because God has revealed Himself to us that we can have that assurance which is the essence of Christian faith.

The book abounds in cogent reasoning, within the limits set for himself by the author, in apt illustration and eloquent appeal. The author analyzes some of the difficult passages in the Sermon on the Mount. He points out that Jesus is not here giving new laws or offering a code, but proclaims the emancipation of the Christian from the shackles of the law.

Jesus said, "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." The Romans had a law according to which they could impress a native of any conquered province to go with them one mile to show them the road. Jesus says, "Go with them two miles." That means, "Take the whole action out of the sphere of grudging obedience and put it into the sphere of willing, happy service of others." That is the spirit of the New Covenant religion, not its letter. The minute you try to make rigid law of it, you make it ridiculous.

Again, Dr. Dell speaks of the righteousness of God and the eternal lot of the godless. He asks:

What else can God do with sin? Given a creature who has been endowed with an undying soul and who at the same time is granted the liberty of choosing to rebel against God, what else can God do with him if he does choose to rebel but to give him over to his own choice? Choosing to rebel against God, he chooses to rebel against light, against truth, against goodness, against love, against virtue, against gentleness,

against kindness, against sanity, against peace, against everything high and noble and right. He chooses darkness and lies and vileness and hate and viciousness and brutality and cruelty and insanity and strife. When an immortal soul chooses those things for his eternal home and its eternal furnishings, he chooses hell.

Concerning the social Gospel which seeks to reform society from without and does not begin with the individual:

This method of approach to the kingdom of God resembles an attempt to move an automobile by pushing it. You are combating the inertia of dead weight. And in trying to move society into the kingdom of God by external pressure you are combating sin, which is worse than a dead weight; for it actively resists pressure. But put a motor in your car, and it will move of its own power in the direction you want it to go. We cannot put a motor into society, for it has no collective motor. It has a large number of individual motors (or motivators)—human hearts. There is where the incentive, the driving power of the good life must be developed. Faith in God is that driving power.

Farther on we meet with this reference to millennial hopes: "I do not believe in any Utopia, and I do not believe in any millennial kingdom. Sin is here and will last as long as the race lasts."

We have a question mark here and there. "Saintly souls like Kagawa" does not properly describe the Japanese mystic if "saint" is used in the Christian sense. The changed attitude of science toward the "laws" of the universe should have found a place in Chapter 11 and elsewhere. The illustration of God's omnipresence derived from the physical state of reverie, when your mind "can wander millions of miles out into space and yet be entirely where you are," is not convincing. But the Christian pastor can be depended upon to make his own evaluation of this as of any other essay in the field of Christian evidences and will derive from it much good for his dealing with individual young people and for his addresses to young people's societies.

TH. GRAEBNER

The Hymnal. Authorized by the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Published for the Church by Eden Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 653 pages. \$1.30.

This is the new official hymnbook of the Evangelical and Reformed Church produced by a committee composed of Joaquin P. Meyer, Chairman, W. Sherman Kerschner, Secretary, Richard G. Appel, Edward Butkofsky, Armin Haenssler, Erwin R. Koch, Mrs. Theodore Mayer, and Henry I. Stahr. This committee had been appointed in 1935 as soon as the merger of the Evangelical Synod and the Reformed Church in the United States had proceeded so far as to assure a permanent union. The committee's aims "throughout has been to help worshipers find God in a large way through adequate means of worship, to voice faith in Jesus Christ as the source of unlimited redemptive power, and to emphasize the moral values of the Christian Church as the bulwark of a righteous society."

The arrangement of the book is as follows: 1. Orders of Worship (Morning Service, Evening Service, a brief Order of Worship, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the Beatitudes). 2. The Hymns (481 in number). 3. Responses and Canticles. 4. The

Church Year (the Introits and Texts for Epistles and Gospels, etc.). 5. Responsive Prayers—Litanies. 6. Responsive Readings. 7. Indexes.

The hymns are classified as follows: 1. Adoration and Praise. 2. Times of Worship. 3. God the Father. 4. Our Lord Jesus Christ. 5. The Holy Spirit. 6. The Holy Trinity. 7. The Word of God. 8. The Christian Life. 9. The Church of Christ. 10. The Kingdom of God on Earth. 11. Eternal Life. 12. Seasons and Special Services. 13. Youth and Schools. 14. Children. 15. Miscellaneous Hymns.

The Order of the Morning Service in a general way follows the Lutheran Common Service: Processional Hymn. Invocation and Opening Sentence. Confession of Sin. Assurance of Pardon. Introit and Collect for the Day. The Gloria in Excelsis. The Lessons. The Apostles' Creed. The General Prayer. Anthem. Announcements, Offering. Hymn. Sermon. Hymn or Doxology. Benediction.

The Order of the Evening Service is a very barren order and bears no resemblance to the traditional Order of Vespers.

Although in the section entitled "Responses and Canticles" responses for the Order of Holy Communion are given, no specific order for the celebration of the Lord's Supper is indicated. In the Canticle section the traditional canticles and chants for Matins and Vespers are offered, but the traditional orders are not given. However, a Christmas Service is offered, in which is suggested the use of the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus*, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, the *Nunc Dimittis*, and the *Te Deum Laudamus*.

As to the hymns and their arrangement: The method followed is more in harmony (as was to be expected) with that of other Reformed hymnals than with that which we are accustomed to in Lutheran hymnbooks. While certain concessions are made in favor of the traditional Church Year arrangement, it can be totally disregarded by a pastor without otherwise affecting the practical use of the *Hymnal* in the service. While the typography and the page arrangement are good, it does detract from the book's practicability that the first line of each hymn is not used as a heading. Instead, the heading of the division or subdivision under which a hymn is classified is given altogether too much prominence.

If our checkup is exact, there are 133 tunes in this *Hymnal* which *The Lutheran Hymnal* has and approximately 170 hymns, although among the translated hymns the translations are not always the same. Besides a number of hymns of comparatively recent origin, there are nineteen new texts which have never before appeared in any official hymnbook, and fifteen tunes and two descants were especially composed for this book.

Viewed from the standpoint of the church group for which this *Hymnal* was prepared, it is no doubt the best collection textually and musically in its history in America. The fact that both these bodies (the Evangelical Synod and the Reformed Church in the United States) have a German background leads one to hope that an effort would be made to save many of the great German *chorales* for their English-speaking members. Nor is one disappointed, although there are a number conspicuous by their absence, e. g., "Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord," and "Our Father, Thou in Heaven Above." Eight of Paul Gerhardt's

hymns are included and four of Martin Luther's. But these hymns of Luther, Gerhardt, and others sometimes find themselves in strange company in the book. There are two hymns by Harry Emerson Fosdick and others by J. G. Whittier, W. M. Vories, O. S. Davis, Lawrence Housman, etc., which because of their false teachings of pacifism and millennialism ought not to have been placed side by side with the classical hymns of Christendom that are soundly Scriptural.

On the musical side the *Hymnal* has much merit, even though there are quite a number of tunes that are not strictly hymn tunes. The Committee had the expert assistance of Dr. Clarence Dickinson and Dr. Helen Dickinson, both of Union Theological Seminary, in their task.

Among the interesting tunes included we find the Finnish tune "Nyland"; the Hungarian tune "Magyar"; the Welsh tune "Meirionydd"; the German tune "Narenza" (set to Wesley's "Commit Thou All Thy Griefs"); the French tune "Rendez à Dieu," by Louis Bourgeois; the Welsh tune "Llangloffan," and others.

The committee in several instances placed the German original beside the English translation, as in "Silent Night" and "Now Thank We All Our God," and the Latin text with "Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful."

All texts have their tunes, and in a number of instances certain tunes are given as often as four times.

W. G. POLACK

For Christ and Country. By Dr. Walter A. Maier. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 392 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. \$1.50.

Concordia Publishing House presents in the above volume the messages of the ninth Lutheran Hour. In vigorous language Dr. Maier urges throughout his addresses the need of repentance on the part of our nation and the necessity that Christians prove themselves by word and deed the salt of the earth, the light of the world. The author avoids the mistake so frequently made in our day of promising victory to a nation as the result of sincere acceptance of Christ. While Christ has given to His Church Universal the promise that the gates of hell shall not overthrow it, He has not given an unqualified promise of temporal and material blessings to His Christians. As Dr. Maier puts it, "Pray persistently, with trust which can never be defeated, because 'with God nothing shall be impossible!' By the omnipotence of Heaven, if it be His will and for our individual and collective best, He can change our sorrows, stop this war, and give the world a true and righteous peace, with all oppression defeated." May we all heed this urgent admonition to pray for the spiritual and material welfare of our beloved country. And may God in His undeserved grace continue to build His Church even in these troubled times and grant again to the war-stricken world a just and lasting peace.

TH. LAETSCH

The King of Glory. A Children's Christmas Service. By A. C. Mueller. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 15 pages, 6×9 . Single copies 5 cents; dozen 50 cents; 100 \$3.50.

This simple Christmas service for children is built up in the usual manner, the basis being the Order of Vespers, and the customary

alternation between songs, chants, questions and answers, and recitations being observed. The service should carry a special appeal, since it presupposes little or nothing by way of special preparation or training and yet tells the story in a very appealing manner.

P. E. KRETMANN

The Unobstructed Universe. By Stewart Edward White. E. P. Dutton and Company, New York. 320 pages. \$2.50.

The Road I Know. By Stewart Edward White. E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., Publishers, New York. 243 pages. \$2.50.

The jacket in which the first of these titles reached us from the publisher shows a background of night sky with a section of the Milky Way. Our impression, accordingly, was that of a study of the universe as now known to science, and since we had read with great delight Mr. White's earlier books on the North Woods, the Sierras, and other aspects of nature, we sat down with happy anticipations to the reading of this volume and of its sequel, *The Road I Know*. Never has this reviewer been more keenly disappointed in a book. *The Unobstructed Universe* is a record of experiences in the field of spiritism, of which Mr. White has become an addict. He believes that in the messages from the departed he is able to offer America "a blueprint for the redesigning of life—national and personal."

The book need not detain us long. Mr. White's wife died in 1939, and the psychic matters which absorbed their interest continue through communications, so Mr. White believes, between husband and wife. First, it was only a feeling of her Presence, and she as yet had nothing to say. Then, through a medium, the way was opened, and on the basis of the communications thus received, the book was written. And what are these revelations from the other world? They are in part the usual trifles reported from spiritistic seances, as when Betty (the wife) asked her husband to tell a mutual friend that there is a red box in the house wherein she may keep her furs; references to a watch which he kept on his night table and which "ticked too loud." Mainly, however, the book is intended to prove that "there is only one universe"—and the way between the living and the dead is unobstructed. The book differs from other records of spirit messages in using the verbiage of modern science. You can get into touch with the universe if you "step up your frequency." The communication with the other world is possible when the medium's "magnetic field" is opened. The characters discuss the fourth dimension. Much of the book consists of dialogues discoursing on the "Beta" body, "pluralistic monism," metaphysical ideas from Leibnitz, and consciousness. "Consciousness is in evolution. Therefore it is in various degrees. Each degree has its frequency. That frequency is a—well, I'll have to call it a sort of magnetic energy. It is a vibratory emanation of the vital force; the thing that is; the individual rate." This should suffice. The reviewer gave up in chapter 26, where Betty "handles space." The continuation volume we have not read. *The Road* Mr. White knows is *The Road to Endor*, so powerfully pictured by Rudyard Kipling in the period of spiritistic obsession after World War I.

TH. GRAEBNER

The Dictionary of Philosophy. Edited by Dagobert D. Runes. Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th St., New York, N. Y. 342 pages, $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$. Price, \$6.00.

The fact that this very appealing *Dictionary of Philosophy* appears in a second edition so shortly after its publication proves that there is a great demand among our intelligentsia for a work of this kind. Quoting Samuel Johnson, the editor humbly remarks in his *Preface*: "Dictionaries are like watches; the best cannot be expected to go quite true, but the worst is better than none." But to the reviewer it seems as if the editor and his able assistants had produced a most useful piece of work, the popularity of which is well deserved not only because it offers so great a wealth of biographical material, explains philosophical terms and formulas briefly and accurately, and gives fine summaries of practically all modern and ancient Oriental and Occidental philosophical systems, but chiefly because it does all this in so interesting a manner that the student is hardly aware of studying matters philosophical, and so simply that the layman of average intelligence and education can derive real benefit from practically all items discussed. Relatively only a small part of the book demands more detailed information for its full understanding than is given here. The material offered, often at considerable length, embraces all major schools and theories of philosophy, philosophy of law, religious philosophy, logic, epistemology, ethics, metaphysics, Chinese, Jewish, and Hindu philosophy. Indeed, an invaluable book for all students of human cultural development! The editor expresses the hope that "the present volume will serve as reliably as the chronometer of today in the time-pattern of the philosophic world." It does so in most cases. Still, as the chronometer of today needs watching, so also some of the paragraphs in this book. In the article treating the Reformation, for example, it is said: "Man's conscience, his reason, and the Scriptures together became his [Luther's] only norm and authority." This juxtaposition of conscience, reason, and Scripture is not fair to Luther's theological principle regarding the real authority in religion. The great Reformer proclaimed the *sola Scriptura* so emphatically that there can be no doubt as to the place which he assigned to the Bible as the only source and norm of faith and life for the Christian believer. He followed conscience and reason only as these were "bound by clear passages of God's Word." The writer of the article later admits this when he says: "At first the Scriptures were taken as conscience permitted; then conscience became bound by the Scriptures."

J. THEODORE MUELLER

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, London, and Edinburgh:

Case Work in Preaching. By Ezra Rhoades, D.D. 159 pages, $5\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$1.25.



